



Mahogany L. Browne

Topics

Activism and Social Justice, Children and Young Adult Authors, Culture and Society, Diversity and Inclusion

Travels From

New York

Bio

Mahogany L. Browne is a writer, organizer, educator, and Interim Executive Director of Urban Word NYC & Poetry Coordinator at St. Francis College. She has received fellowships from Agnes Gund, Air Serenbe, Cave Canem, Poets House, Mellon Research, and Rauschenberg. She is the author of *Woke: A Young Poets Call to Justice*, *Woke Baby*, and *Black Girl Magic*, *Kissing Caskets* (Yes Yes Books) and *Dear Twitter* (Penmanship Books). She is also the founder of Woke Baby Book Fair (a nationwide diversity literature campaign) and as an Arts for Justice grantee, is completing her first book of essays on mass incarceration, investigating its impact on women and children. Although born in Oakland, California, Mahogany has been based in Brooklyn, New York, for over 15 years. A strong, black woman, she is unapologetic in her work as a spoken word, poet, author, and activist. She uses her personal experience with addiction, racism, sexism, and oppression to inspire her own brand of shameless, authentic work. Mahogany's spoken word performances create a platform through poetry for

women and girls to feel empowered and heard. In the beginning, encouragement was elusive for Mahogany. During a high school honors English class, she was told not to write poetry and dropped out the next semester. Finding the strength to persevere, the poet went on to graduate from the MFA Writing and Activism program at Pratt Institute. Her talent and personal struggles have proved to make her success today proof of her undeniable persistence. Featured in the PBS NewsHour segment, *Brief But Spectacular*, Mahogany L. Browne read her poem "Black Girl Magic" about the struggles facing African-American women and girls in modern society. She has been featured in HBO's *Brave New Voices* as the artistic director at Urban Word NYC. She is the publisher of Penmanship Books, curator of the Nuyorican Poets Cafe Friday Night Slam, founder of the Women Writers of Color Reading Room, and the director of Black Lives Matter at Pratt Institute. A Cave Canem fellow and Agnes Gund Fund Recipient, Mahogany has published several poetry collections and books, including *Black Girl Magic*, *Kissing Caskets*, *Redbone*, and *Dear Twitter: Love Letters Hashed Out Online*. She has also released five LPs, including a live album, *Sheroshima*. Her work has appeared in *Pluck*, *The Manhattanville Review*, and others. Mahogany has toured internationally as a member of *Global Poetics*, an international arts exchange. Find out more about [Mahogany Browne](#) on her website.

SPEECHES

Black Girl Magic

Much of what twenty-first-century culture tells black girls is not pretty: Don't wear this; don't smile at that; don't have an opinion; don't dream big. And most of all, don't love yourself. In response to such destructive ideas, internationally recognized poet Mahogany Browne challenges the conditioning of society by crafting an anthem of strength and magic undeniable in its bloom for all beautiful Black girls. In this performance, Mahogany performs her piece entitled, *Black Girl Magic* which is a journey from girlhood to womanhood and an invitation to audience members to find magic in themselves.

Woke Baby

For all the littlest progressives, waking up to seize a new day of justice and activism. Woke babies are up early. Woke babies raise their fists in the air. Woke babies cry out for justice. Woke babies grow up to change the world. This lyrical and empowering poem is both a celebration of what it means to be a baby and what it means to be woke. "Woke Baby" is an anthem of hope.

Kissing Caskets

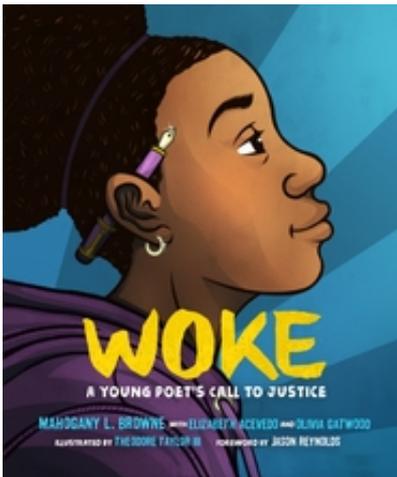
Like most young black girls growing up in Northern California, Mahogany L. Browne tussles with ideas of femininity & gender roles, addiction & the prison industrial complex, sexuality & seclusion. Each poem is eulogized celebration of what we lose to the dark when no one is looking.

Smudge

A powerful, intimate, and complex portrait of a girl who deserves more than what she is given: a world in which our hero is both painfully invisible and vulnerably exposed. Browne masterfully invites us into the girl's life with language that is evocative, nuanced, and immediate. You live each moment presented in each poem as if it were your own and feel deeply the girl's fears and her humiliations, her hopeful trust and blind love, her shifting sense of safety and self. But despite the honest and harrowing heartbreak that finds its way into the girl, Mahogany shows the defiant beauty, a strength of character

and self that willfully defies the limits others attempt to put on this girl. Browne continues her tradition of creating rich, unflinching, and unapologetic work cataloging the world as she sees it. Several poems are available for performance that have been published in this novel.

BOOKS



Hardcover

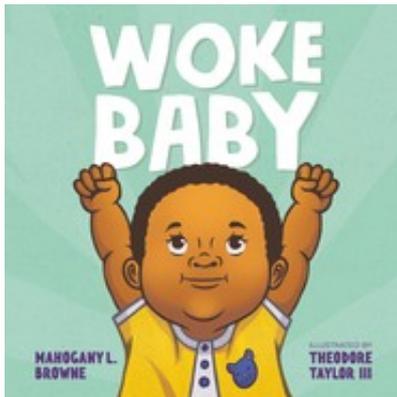
[Woke: A Young Poet's Call to Justice](#)

Roaring Book Press

Woke: A Young Poet's Guide to Justice is a collection of poems to inspire kids to stay woke and become a new generation of activists. Historically poets have been on the forefront of social movements. *Woke* is a collection of poems by women that reflects the joy and passion in the fight for social justice, tackling topics from discrimination to empathy, and acceptance to speaking out.

[Woke Baby](#)

Roaring Book Press



This lyrical and empowering book is both a celebration of what it means to be a baby and what it means to be woke. With bright playful art, *Woke Baby* is an anthem of hope in a world where the only limit to a skyscraper is more blue.

Board Book



Hardcover

[Black Girl Magic](#)

Roaring Book Press

Much of what twenty-first century culture tells black girls is not pretty: Don't wear this; don't smile at that. Don't have an opinion; don't dream big. And most of all, don't love yourself. In response to such destructive ideas, internationally recognized poet Mahogany Browne challenges the conditioning of society by crafting an anthem of strength and magic undeniable in its bloom for all beautiful Black girls. She has traveled the world sharing her vision of *Black Girl Magic*, and now in collaboration with artist Jess X. Snow, presents her acclaimed tribute in a visual form.

REVIEWS: "Out of necessity, Mahogany L. Browne has become her own revolution: she is one of those people who sees things in the world that need to change and actually makes real moves to change them. While there can only ever really be one Mahogany L. Browne, we'd be very lucky to have more poets/humans who are as fiercely visionary, hardworking, and resourceful as her."

- PloughShares, Emerson College

Praise for her Poems

"Yet in this rich historical moment in which black women are loudly and proudly claiming more and diversified ownership of their works and the media itself, this is as much a document of that moment as it is an emerging, beloved tome for black girls of all ages to read and share in classrooms and conferences, over brunch, on a lazy Sunday in autumn, or whenever or wherever one needs an assuring word."

-*Kirkus Reviews*