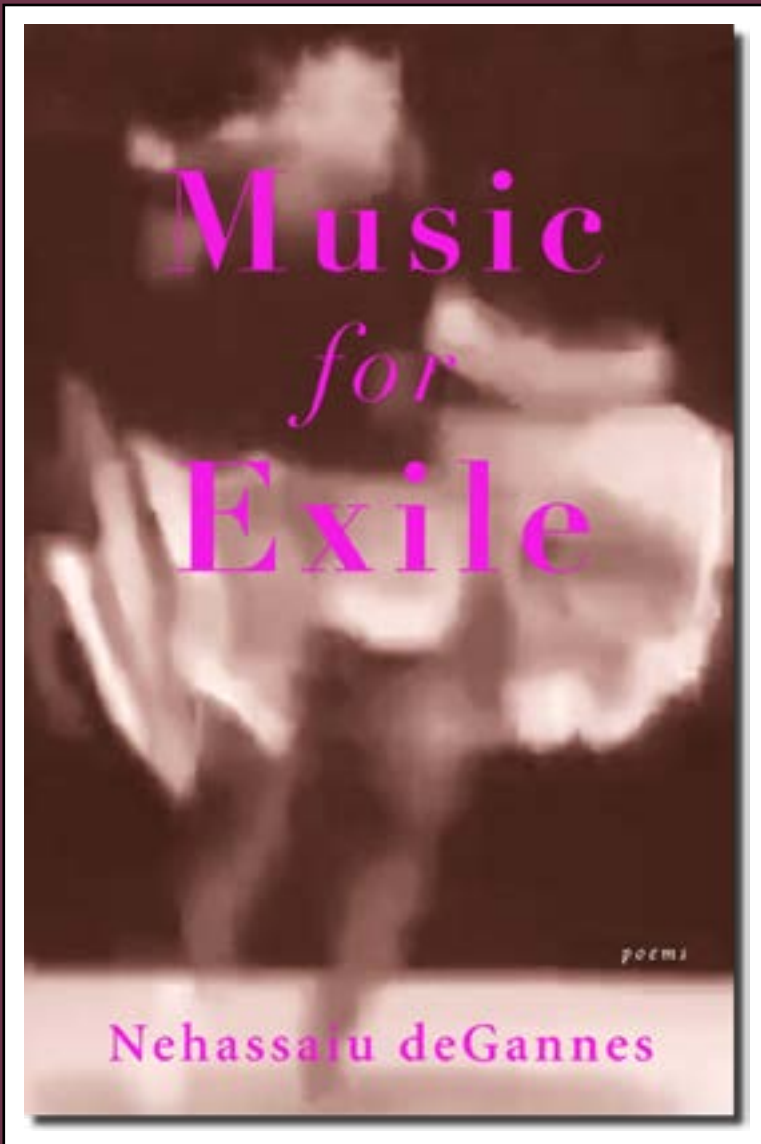


MUSIC FOR EXILE

BY NEHASSAIU DE GANNES



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Trekking from the U.S. to the Caribbean and Canada— wind at their back, ear to the ground, listening for "the logos of what trembles underfoot" — the poems in *Music For Exile* glean an inheritance of lyrical, received and invented forms to beckon a "mythic assemblage," an aggregation of personal and historical losses, intimate and en masse. In poems of place, poems of encounter, domestic epics and epistolary calls, deGannes locates exiled music in the caesurae of one immigrant woman's arc and troubles the ache, that "ironic hunger" when home, whether here or there - house, country or history, is itself a vortex of violence. The poems trace and retrace, they crossover, they "draw poison out" they "fissure desire" and proclaim "no one can say gone is gone," enacting and inviting an expansive reckoning of *all* that has brought us here. From this might be salvaged a radical sense of belonging, Glissant's "knowledge of the Whole, greater for having been at the abyss." *Music For Exile* is Nehassaiu deGannes' first book-length collection of poems.

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Nehassaiu deGannes was born in Trinidad & Tobago, grew up in Canada and spent time in the Middle East with her family. She studied English Lit at McGill (B.A.), African American Studies at Temple (M.A.), earned an M.F.A. in Literary Arts (Poetry) at Brown, where she also uncovered a parallel passion for acting, and went on to train professionally at Trinity Rep Conservatory. Nehassaiu now acts Off-B'way, regionally and internationally. Her writing has appeared in several journals, among them *American Poetry Review*, *Callaloo*, *The Caribbean Writer*, *Poem/Memoir/Story*, as well as two-award winning chapbooks, *Percussion*, *Salt & Honey* (Philbrick Prize,) and *Undressing The River* (Center For Book Arts National Award.) Recipient of fellowships from Cave Canem, Vermont Studio Center, Community of Writers, Rhode Island State Council on The Arts and The James Michener Caribbean Writers Institute, Nehassaiu has taught at RISD, Goddard, Rhode Island College and most recently, Princeton. She has been recognized with a Wall Street Journal national citation and a Berkshire Theatre Critics Award for her outstanding work as an actor. Nehassaiu lives in Brooklyn, NY.