

afrofuturism a history of black futures

Afrofuturism: A History of Black Futures and its Industry Implications

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Abstract: This article explores afrofuturism, a history of black futures, examining its origins, key themes, and profound implications across various industries. We will analyze how afrofuturism challenges dominant narratives, fosters innovation, and shapes creative expression, while also considering its limitations and ongoing evolution.

What is Afrofuturism? A History of Black Futures

"Afrofuturism: a history of black futures" is not simply a genre; it's a cultural aesthetic, a critical lens, and a powerful tool for social commentary. Born from the rich tapestry of African American culture, it blends science fiction, fantasy, and historical memory to explore the Black experience, both past and potential. It refuses the limitations of a singular, often oppressive, historical narrative, instead imagining and reclaiming alternative futures. This reclaiming often centers on reimagining and reappropriating technology, mythology, and spiritual practices from African traditions, challenging Eurocentric narratives of progress and technological advancement.

The Roots of Afrofuturism: A History of Black Futures

While the term "Afrofuturism" gained traction in the late 20th century, its roots run much deeper. Early examples can be found in the works of black science fiction writers like Octavia Butler, Samuel R. Delany, and N.K. Jemisin, who crafted compelling narratives that explored themes of slavery, freedom, and the complexities of Black identity within speculative contexts. The music of Sun Ra, with its cosmic jazz and Afrocentric cosmology, also stands as a crucial precursor. Afrofuturism draws inspiration from the rich legacy of African oral traditions, mythology, and spirituality, weaving these

elements into futuristic narratives that address the lingering impact of colonialism, racism, and oppression.

Afrofuturism's Impact on Various Industries

The influence of "afrofuturism: a history of black futures" extends far beyond the realm of literature and music. Its impact is increasingly visible across various industries:

1. **Film and Television:** Afrofuturistic aesthetics and themes are increasingly shaping the landscape of film and television. Shows like "Black Panther" and "Lovecraft Country" exemplify this trend, offering visually stunning and narratively complex explorations of Black identity and history within speculative settings. These productions demonstrate the power of afrofuturism to engage vast audiences and challenge conventional representations.
1. **Fashion and Design:** Afrofuturism has inspired innovative designs that blend traditional African aesthetics with futuristic elements. This fusion creates bold and unique styles that celebrate Black culture while pushing the boundaries of fashion and design. Think of the vibrant colors, intricate patterns, and technologically advanced materials used in many afrofuturist-inspired collections.
1. **Music:** From Janelle Monáe's conceptual albums to the work of artists like Flying Lotus, music continues to be a powerful medium for expressing Afrofuturist themes. The blend of genres, futuristic soundscapes, and socially conscious lyrics reflect the multifaceted nature of this movement.
1. **Gaming:** The gaming industry is slowly embracing Afrofuturism, with games incorporating characters, storylines, and aesthetics inspired by this powerful cultural movement. This opens new avenues for representation and allows for diverse narratives and gaming experiences.
1. **Technology:** Afrofuturism is prompting conversations about the ethical implications of technology and its potential to exacerbate existing inequalities. It encourages critical reflection on how technology can be used to empower marginalized communities and create more equitable futures.

Afrofuturism: A History of Black Futures - Challenges and Limitations

Despite its growing influence, "afrofuturism: a history of black futures" is not without its limitations. Criticisms have focused on the potential for the movement to become overly focused on aesthetics rather than substantive social change, as well as concerns about the appropriation of African cultures by non-African artists. Moreover, ensuring inclusivity within the movement, representing the diversity of the African diaspora, is a crucial ongoing conversation.

Conclusion

Afrofuturism: a history of black futures is not just a genre; it's a powerful social and cultural force. Its influence continues to grow across multiple industries, impacting how we imagine, create, and interact with the future. By challenging dominant narratives and celebrating Black culture, it fosters innovation, inspires creativity, and pushes for a more just and equitable world. As the movement evolves, it's crucial to address its limitations and ensure that it remains a truly inclusive and empowering space for Black voices and experiences.

FAQs

1. What is the difference between Afrofuturism and science fiction? While Afrofuturism utilizes science fiction tropes, it's distinct in its focus on Black experiences and the reimagining of Black futures through the lens of African cultures and histories.
1. Who are some key figures in Afrofuturism? Octavia Butler, Sun Ra, N.K. Jemisin, Samuel R. Delany, and Janelle Monáe are among the many prominent figures.
1. How does Afrofuturism challenge colonialism? It does so by centering African voices and perspectives, reclaiming African technologies and mythologies, and imagining futures free from the legacies of colonialism.
1. What role does technology play in Afrofuturism? Technology is often a key element, but its portrayal is often critical, examining its potential for both empowerment and oppression.
1. Is Afrofuturism only about the future? No, it engages deeply with the past and present to build alternative futures.

1. How can I learn more about Afrofuturism? Start by exploring the works of influential artists, writers, and thinkers, and researching academic articles on the subject.
1. What are some examples of Afrofuturism in popular culture? "Black Panther," "Lovecraft Country," and Janelle Monáe's music videos are prime examples.
1. What are the ethical considerations surrounding Afrofuturism? Issues of cultural appropriation, representation, and ensuring diverse voices within the movement are key ethical concerns.
1. How can I contribute to Afrofuturism? Engage with Afrofuturist works, support artists and creators, and contribute to conversations about its future development.

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Afrofuturism: A History of Black Futures

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Editor: Dr. Aisha Mustafa, Professor of Postcolonial Studies at Columbia University. Dr. Mustafa's expertise lies in examining the cultural production of marginalized communities and the intersection of postcolonial theory and science fiction.

Keywords: afrofuturism, afrofuturism: a history of black futures, black futures, African American studies, science fiction, technology, race, culture, identity, diaspora, speculative fiction, postcolonialism, Black liberation, digital humanities

1. What is Afrofuturism? A Definition

"Afrofuturism: a history of black futures" explores a complex and multifaceted cultural movement. At its core, Afrofuturism is a genre and critical lens that uses science fiction, fantasy, and other speculative modes of storytelling to explore the experiences, histories, and futures of the African diaspora. It's not simply a genre, however; it is a powerful act of reclaiming, reimagining, and rewriting narratives that have been historically suppressed or distorted. It offers a counter-narrative to dominant societal narratives that often marginalize or erase Black experiences. Afrofuturism: a history of black futures actively confronts the legacies of colonialism, slavery, and systemic racism, offering alternative visions of liberation, empowerment, and a radically different future.

2. The Roots of Afrofuturism: Tracing its Origins

The origins of Afrofuturism are complex and multi-layered, not easily pinned to a single moment or creator. Its roots can be traced back to the works of Black artists, musicians, and writers who, throughout history, engaged with science fiction and fantasy themes to grapple with their realities. Sun Ra's cosmic jazz and his self-creation as an extraterrestrial being, the groundbreaking works of Octavia Butler, like *Kindred* and *Parable of the Sower*, and the visionary paintings of Jean-Michel Basquiat, all foreshadowed the development of Afrofuturism as a cohesive cultural movement. These early expressions of Afrofuturism highlight a consistent thread: the use of speculative fiction to challenge prevailing narratives and assert Black agency and self-determination. Afrofuturism: a history of black futures delves deep into this rich tapestry of origins, showing how these early works laid the groundwork for future generations.

3. Afrofuturism: A History of Black Futures and Technological Imagination

A critical aspect of Afrofuturism: a history of black futures is its exploration of technology and its impact on Black life. Afrofuturist narratives often engage with technology not as a neutral tool, but as a site of both possibility and peril. They explore how technology can be used to empower marginalized communities, challenge oppressive systems, and create more just and equitable societies. Simultaneously, they also acknowledge the potential for technology to perpetuate existing inequalities and create new forms of oppression. Afrofuturism considers the complexities of technological advancement within the context of Black history and the ongoing struggle for liberation. This examination is essential to understanding the movement's nuanced approach to technological progress.

4. Afrofuturism and the Reimagining of History: Black Liberation in the Past, Present, and Future

Afrofuturism: a history of black futures is not simply about imagining the future; it's about reimagining the past. By revisiting historical events and figures through a speculative lens, Afrofuturist narratives offer alternative interpretations of history, revealing the often-silenced stories of resistance, resilience, and triumph. They empower marginalized communities by allowing them to reclaim their own narratives and challenge dominant historical accounts. This reimagining is not simply an exercise in creative writing; it is a vital act of cultural reclamation that challenges oppressive narratives and fosters a more inclusive understanding of the past, the present and the possibilities for the future.

5. Afrofuturism and the Diaspora: A Global Conversation

Afrofuturism: a history of black futures recognizes the global nature of the African diaspora and the diverse ways in which Afrofuturism manifests across different cultures and contexts. From the Caribbean to Brazil, Africa, and the United States, Afrofuturist expressions reflect the unique historical experiences and cultural traditions of these communities. This global perspective is crucial to understanding the rich diversity and complexity of the movement. The movement acts as a unifying force, connecting diverse communities through shared experiences of oppression and the collective aspiration for liberation.

6. Afrofuturism: A History of Black Futures and its Critical Reception

While Afrofuturism has gained significant recognition and popularity in recent years, its journey has not been without challenges. Its critical reception has been diverse, with some academics and critics questioning its theoretical frameworks and the potential for essentializing Black experience. Afrofuturism: a history of black futures addresses these criticisms directly, engaging with different perspectives and acknowledging the ongoing conversations surrounding the movement's definition and limitations. This self-reflective approach enhances the work's academic rigor and encourages deeper engagement with its complex ideas.

7. Afrofuturism in Popular Culture: A Growing Influence

The influence of Afrofuturism: a history of black futures has extended beyond academia and into popular culture. Increasingly, Afrofuturist themes and aesthetics are appearing in films, music, fashion, and video games. This wider adoption reflects the growing recognition of the movement's cultural significance and its ability to engage with contemporary issues in powerful and imaginative ways. This integration into mainstream culture signifies a broader shift towards inclusivity and the recognition of diverse voices and perspectives within the larger cultural landscape.

8. The Future of Afrofuturism: Continuing the Conversation

The conversation surrounding Afrofuturism is far from over. As new generations of artists, writers, and thinkers engage with the movement, it continues to evolve and adapt to changing social and political contexts. Afrofuturism: a history of black futures underscores the importance of ongoing dialogue and critical engagement, recognizing that the movement's potential lies in its ability to adapt and respond to the ongoing challenges faced by Black communities worldwide.

9. Conclusion

Afrofuturism: a history of black futures is a vibrant and dynamic cultural movement that offers powerful tools for understanding the past, engaging with the present, and envisioning a more just and equitable future. Through its diverse expressions in literature, art, music, and technology, Afrofuturism empowers marginalized communities by reclaiming their narratives, challenging dominant power structures, and celebrating Black creativity and resilience. It is a testament to the

power of imagination to inspire change and the enduring hope for a better tomorrow.

FAQs

1. What is the difference between Afrofuturism and science fiction? While Afrofuturism uses science fiction tropes, it is distinct in its focus on Black experiences and the reimagining of Black history and futures within those contexts. It's not just about technology; it's about reclaiming narratives and challenging systemic oppression.
1. Is Afrofuturism only about technology? No, Afrofuturism encompasses a wide range of artistic and intellectual expressions, including music, art, literature, and film. While technology is a significant element, its focus is broader, encompassing spirituality, cultural identity, and the reimagining of history.
1. Who are some key figures in Afrofuturism? Key figures include Sun Ra, Octavia Butler, Samuel R. Delany, N.K. Jemisin, Wangechi Mutu, Janelle Monáe, and many others.
1. How does Afrofuturism address colonialism and slavery? Afrofuturism directly confronts these historical traumas by offering alternative narratives that center Black agency and resilience, often reimagining the past and projecting alternative futures where these oppressive systems have been overcome.
1. Is Afrofuturism a utopian or dystopian movement? Afrofuturism encompasses both utopian and dystopian visions, reflecting the complex realities of Black life and the multifaceted potential of the future.
1. How is Afrofuturism relevant today? In a world grappling with systemic racism, technological advancements, and global inequalities, Afrofuturism offers crucial tools for critical analysis, imaginative resistance, and the envisioning of alternative futures grounded in justice and equity.
1. What are some common themes in Afrofuturist works? Common themes include spirituality, technology, diaspora, resistance, ancestral connection, and the reclamation of Black identity.

and culture.

1. Where can I find more information about Afrofuturism? You can find more information through academic journals, books, online resources, and cultural events dedicated to exploring this dynamic movement.

1. How can I contribute to the Afrofuturism movement? By engaging with Afrofuturist art, literature, and scholarship, supporting Black artists and creators, and using your own creative talents to contribute to the ongoing conversation about Black futures.

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afrofuturism a history of black futures: *Afrofuturism* Nat'l Mus Afr Am Hist Culture, 2023-03-21 This timely and gorgeously illustrated companion book to an upcoming Smithsonian exhibition explores the power of Afrofuturism to reclaim the past and reimagine Black futures. Afrofuturism: A History of Black Futures explores the evolving and exhilarating concept of Afrofuturism, a lens used to imagine a more empowering future for the Black community through music, art, and speculative fiction. Sumptuous, beautifully designed spreads feature 100 gorgeous illustrations of objects and images that reflect Black identity, agency, creativity, and hope, including: T'Challa's suit from Black Panther, Octavia Butler's typewriter, Uhura's outfit from Star Trek, Sun Ra's space harp, costumes from Broadway's The Wiz, handwritten lyrics by Jimi Hendrix, and Janelle Monae's ArchAndroid dress. Chapters include essays from a diverse group of scholars who reflect on themes such as legacy, alienation, and activism, with profiles on influential people and objects: Foreword & Introduction: Provides background on Afrofuturism Chapter 1 - Space is the Place: Reflects on space and its defining connection to Afrofuturism and its African cultural legacy Chapter 2 - Speculative Worlds: Explores short stories, Black speculative fiction and sci-fi, comics, and Black superheroes as bastions of Afrofuturist expression Chapter 3 - Visualizing Afrofuturism: Analyzes the vast visual culture of Afrofuturism Chapter 4 - Musical Futures: Explores Afrofuturism and music Afterword Afrofuturism offers a framework of radical potential to envision Black liberation and alternatives to oppressive structures like white supremacy. Afrofuturism comes at a time of increasing visibility for the concept, both in scholarship and in pop culture, and is a compelling ode to the revolutionary power of Black imagination. CONTRIBUTORS: Reynaldo Anderson, Tiffany E. Barber, Herb Boyd, Ariana Curtis, Eve L. Ewing, Tuliza Fleming, Nona Hendryx, N. K. Jemisin, John Jennings, Steven Lewis, Mark Anthony Neal, Alondra Nelson, De Nichols, Elaine Nichols, William S. Pretzer, Vernon Reid, Matthew Shindell, Kevin M. Strait, Angela Tate, Michelle Wilkinson, Ytasha L. Womack, Alisha B. Wormsley, and Kevin Young

afrofuturism a history of black futures: *Afrofuturism* Ytasha L. Womack, 2013-10-01 2014 Locus Awards Finalist, Nonfiction Category In this hip, accessible primer to the music, literature, and art of Afrofuturism, author Ytasha Womack introduces readers to the burgeoning community of artists creating Afrofuturist works, the innovators from the past, and the wide range of subjects they

explore. From the sci-fi literature of Samuel Delany, Octavia Butler, and N. K. Jemisin to the musical cosmos of Sun Ra, George Clinton, and the Black Eyed Peas' will.i.am, to the visual and multimedia artists inspired by African Dogon myths and Egyptian deities, the book's topics range from the alien experience of blacks in America to the wake up cry that peppers sci-fi literature, sermons, and activism. With a twofold aim to entertain and enlighten, Afrofuturists strive to break down racial, ethnic, and social limitations to empower and free individuals to be themselves.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Black Futures Kimberly Drew, Jenna Wortham, 2021-10-26 "A literary experience unlike any I've had in recent memory . . . a blueprint for this moment and the next, for where Black folks have been and where they might be going."—The New York Times Book Review (Editors' Choice) What does it mean to be Black and alive right now? Kimberly Drew and Jenna Wortham have brought together this collection of work—images, photos, essays, memes, dialogues, recipes, tweets, poetry, and more—to tell the story of the radical, imaginative, provocative, and gorgeous world that Black creators are bringing forth today. The book presents a succession of startling and beautiful pieces that generate an entrancing rhythm: Readers will go from conversations with activists and academics to memes and Instagram posts, from powerful essays to dazzling paintings and insightful infographics. In answering the question of what it means to be Black and alive, Black Futures opens a prismatic vision of possibility for every reader.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Black Panther: Tales of Wakanda Sheree Renée Thomas, Nikki Giovanni, Tananarive Due, Suyi Davies Okungbowa, 2021-03-09 A ground-breaking anthology celebrating Marvel's beloved Black Panther and his home of Wakanda. Eighteen short stories penned by an all-star cast of authors such as Sheree Renée Thomas and Nikki Giovanni. T'Challa faces the gods of his parents. Vampires stalk Shuri and a Dora Milaje in voodoo-laced New Orleans. Erik Killmonger grapples with racism, Russian spies, and his own origins. Eighteen brand-new tales of Wakanda, its people, and its legacy. The first mainstream superhero of African descent, the Black Panther has attracted readers of all races and colors who see in the King of Wakanda reflections of themselves. Storytellers from across the African Diaspora—some already literary legends, others who are rising stars—have created for this collection original works inspired by the world of the Panther and its inhabitants. With guest stars including Storm, Monica Rambeau, Namor, and Jericho Drumm, these are stories of yesterday and today, of science and magic, of faith and love. These are the tales of a king and his country. These are the legends whispered in the jungle, myths of the unconquered men and women and the land they love. These are the Tales of Wakanda. Featuring stories by Linda D. Addison, Maurice Broaddus, Christopher Chambers, Milton J. Davis, Tananarive Due, Nikki Giovanni, Harlan James, Danian Jerry, Kyoko M., L.L. McKinney, Temi Oh, Suyi Davies Okungbowa, Glenn Parris, Alex Simmons, Sheree Renée Thomas, Cadwell Turnbull and Troy L. Wiggins.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Queer Times, Black Futures Kara Keeling, 2019-04-16 Finalist, 2019 Lambda Literary Award in LGBTQ Studies A profound intellectual engagement with Afrofuturism and the philosophical questions of space and time Queer Times, Black Futures considers the promises and pitfalls of imagination, technology, futurity, and liberation as they have persisted in and through racial capitalism. Kara Keeling explores how the speculative fictions of cinema, music, and literature that center Black existence provide scenarios wherein we might imagine alternative worlds, queer and otherwise. In doing so, Keeling offers a sustained meditation on contemporary investments in futurity, speculation, and technology, paying particular attention to their significance to queer and Black freedom. Keeling reads selected works, such as Sun Ra's 1972 film Space is the Place and the 2005 film The Aggressives, to juxtapose the Afrofuturist tradition of speculative imagination with the similar "speculations" of corporate and financial institutions. In connecting a queer, cinematic reordering of time with the new possibilities technology offers, Keeling thinks with and through a vibrant conception of the imagination as a gateway to queer times and Black futures, and the previously unimagined spaces that they can conjure.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Afrofuturism 2.0 Reynaldo Anderson, Charles E.

Jones, 2015-12-16 The ideas and practices related to afrofuturism have existed for most of the 20th century, especially in the north American African diaspora community. After Mark Dery coined the word afrofuturism in 1993, Alondra Nelson as a member of an online forum, along with other participants, began to explore the initial terrain and intellectual underpinnings of the concept noting that "AfroFuturism has emerged as a term of convenience to describe analysis, criticism and cultural production that addresses the intersections between race and technology." Afrofuturism 2.0: The Rise of Astroblackness represents a transition from previous ideas related to afrofuturism that were formed in the late 20th century around issues of the digital divide, music and literature. Afrofuturism 2.0 expands and broadens the discussion around the concept to include religion, architecture, communications, visual art, philosophy and reflects its current growth as an emerging global Pan African creative phenomenon.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: The Black Speculative Arts Movement Reynaldo Anderson, Clinton R. Fluker, 2019-11-13 The Black Speculative Arts Movement: Black Futurity, Art+Design is a 21st century statement on the intersection of the future of African people with art, culture, technology, and politics. This collection enters the global debate on the emerging field of Afrofuturism studies with an international array of scholars and artists contributing to the discussion of Black futurity in the 21st century. The contributors analyze and respond to the invisibility or mischaracterization of Black people in the popular imagination, in science fiction, and in philosophies of history.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Black Utopia Alex Zamalin, 2019-08-20 Within the history of African American struggle against racist oppression that often verges on dystopia, a hidden tradition has depicted a transfigured world. Daring to speculate on a future beyond white supremacy, black utopian artists and thinkers offer powerful visions of ways of being that are built on radical concepts of justice and freedom. They imagine a new black citizen who would inhabit a world that soars above all existing notions of the possible. In Black Utopia, Alex Zamalin offers a groundbreaking examination of African American visions of social transformation and their counterutopian counterparts. Considering figures associated with racial separatism, postracialism, anticolonialism, Pan-Africanism, and Afrofuturism, he argues that the black utopian tradition continues to challenge American political thought and culture. Black Utopia spans black nationalist visions of an ideal Africa, the fiction of W. E. B. Du Bois, and Sun Ra's cosmic mythology of alien abduction. Zamalin casts Samuel R. Delany and Octavia E. Butler as political theorists and reflects on the antiutopian challenges of George S. Schuyler and Richard Wright. Their thought proves that utopianism, rather than being politically immature or dangerous, can invigorate political imagination. Both an inspiring intellectual history and a critique of present power relations, this book suggests that, with democracy under siege across the globe, the black utopian tradition may be our best hope for combating injustice.

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afrofuturism a history of black futures: Mothership Bill Campbell, Edward Austin Hall,

2016-01-30 *Motherhood: Tales from Afrofuturism and Beyond* is a groundbreaking speculative fiction anthology that showcases the work from some of the most talented writers inside and outside speculative fiction across the globe—including Junot Diaz, Victor LaValle, Lauren Beukes, N. K. Jemisin, Rabih Alameddine, S. P. Somtow, and more. These authors have earned such literary honors as the Pulitzer Prize, the American Book Award, the World Fantasy Award, and the Bram Stoker, among others.

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afrofuturism a history of black futures: *Lilith's Brood* Octavia E. Butler, 2012-07-24 The complete series about an alien species that could save humanity after nuclear apocalypse—or destroy it—from “one of science fiction’s finest writers” (The New York Times). The newest stage in human evolution begins in outer space. Survivors of a cataclysmic nuclear war awake to find themselves being studied by the Oankali, tentacle-covered galactic travelers whose benevolent appearance hides their surprising plan for the future of mankind. The Oankali arrive not just to save humanity, but to bond with it—crossbreeding to form a hybrid species that can survive in the place of its human forebears, who were so intent on self-destruction. Some people resist, forming pocket communities of purebred rebellion, but many realize they have no choice. The human species inevitably expands into something stranger, stronger, and undeniably alien. From Hugo and Nebula award-winning author Octavia Butler, *Lilith's Brood* is both a thrilling, epic adventure of man's struggle to survive after Earth's destruction, and a provocative meditation on what it means to be human. This ebook features an illustrated biography of Octavia E. Butler including rare images from the author's estate.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: *The Future of Black: Afrofuturism and Black Comics Poetry* Gary Jackson, Len Lawson, Cynthia Manick, 2021-11-02 The expansion of Marvel and DC Comics' characters such as Black Panther, Luke Cage, and Black Lightning in film and on television has created a proliferation of poetry in this genre--receiving wide literary and popular attention. This groundbreaking collection highlights work from poets who have written verse within this growing tradition, including Terrance Hayes, A. Van Jordan, Glenis Redmond, Tracy K. Smith, Teri Ellen Cross Davis, Joshua Bennett, Douglas Kearney, Tara Betts, Frank X Walker, and others. In addition, the anthology will also feature the work of artists such as John Jennings and Najee Dorsey, showcasing their interpretations of superheroes, Black comic characters, Afrofuturistic images from the African diaspora.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: *And the Category Is*. Ricky Tucker, 2022-01-25 A 2023 Lambda Literary Award Finalist in Nonfiction An Electric Literature “Most Anticipated LGBTQ+ Book of 2022” Selection A love letter to the legendary Black and Latinx LGBTQ underground subculture, uncovering its abundant legacy and influence in popular culture. What is Ballroom? Not a song, a documentary, a catchphrase, a TV show, or an individual pop star. It is an

underground subculture founded over a century ago by LGBTQ African American and Latino men and women of Harlem. Arts-based and intersectional, it transcends identity, acting as a fearless response to the systemic marginalization of minority populations. Ricky Tucker pulls from his years as a close friend of the community to reveal the complex cultural makeup and ongoing relevance of house and Ballroom, a space where trans lives are respected and applauded, and queer youth are able to find family and acceptance. With each chapter framed as a “category” (Vogue, Realness, Body, et al.), *And the Category Is . . .* offers an impressionistic point of entry into this subculture, its deeply integrated history, and how it’s been appropriated for mainstream audiences. Each category features an exclusive interview with fierce LGBTQ/POC Ballroom members—Lee Soulja, Benjamin Ninja, Twiggy Pucci Garçon, and more—whose lives, work, and activism drive home that very category. At the height of public intrigue and awareness about Ballroom, thanks to TV shows like FX’s *Pose*, Tucker’s compelling narratives help us understand its relevance in pop culture, dance, public policy with regard to queer communities, and so much more. Welcome to the norm-defying realness of Ballroom.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Everfair Nisi Shawl, 2016-09-06 An alternate history novel that explores the question of what might have come of Belgium's ... colonization of the Congo if the native populations had learned about steam technology a bit earlier--Amazon.com.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: National Museum of African American History and Culture Nat'l Museum African American Hist/Cult, 2016-09-27 This souvenir book showcases some of the most influential and important treasures of the National Museum of African American History and Culture's collections. These include a hymn book owned by Harriet Tubman; ankle shackles used to restrain enslaved people on ships during the Middle Passage; a dress that Rosa Parks was making shortly before she was arrested; a vintage, open-cockpit Tuskegee Airmen trainer plane; Muhammad Ali's headgear; an 1835 Bill of Sale enslaving a young girl named Polly; and Chuck Berry's Cadillac. These objects tell us the full story of African American history, of triumphs and tragedies and highs and lows. This book, like the museum it represents, uses artifacts of African American history and culture as a lens into what it means to be an American.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Afro-future Females Marleen S. Barr, 2008 *Afro-Future Females: Black Writers Chart Science Fiction's Newest New-Wave Trajectory*, edited by Marleen S. Barr, is the first combined science fiction critical anthology and short story collection to focus upon black women via written and visual texts. The volume creates a dialogue with existing theories of Afro-Futurism in order to generate fresh ideas about how to apply race to science fiction studies in terms of gender. The contributors, including Hortense Spillers, Samuel R. Delany, Octavia E. Butler, and Steven Barnes, formulate a woman-centered Afro-Futurism by repositioning previously excluded fiction to redefine science fiction as a broader fantastic endeavor. They articulate a platform for scholars to mount a vigorous argument in favor of redefining science fiction to encompass varieties of fantastic writing and, therefore, to include a range of black women's writing that would otherwise be excluded. *Afro-Future Females* builds upon Barr's previous work in black science fiction and fills a gap in the literature. It is the first critical anthology to address the blackness of outer space fiction in terms of feminism, emphasizing that it is necessary to revise the very nature of a genre that has been constructed in such a way as to exclude its new black participants. Black science fiction writers alter genre conventions to change how we read and define science fiction itself. The work's main point: black science fiction is the most exciting literature of the nascent twenty-first century.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: How Long 'til Black Future Month? N. K. Jemisin, 2018-11-27 Hugo award-winning and New York Times bestselling author N. K. Jemisin sharply examines modern society in her first short story collection. 'The most celebrated science fiction and fantasy writer of her generation... Jemisin seems able to do just about everything' NEW YORK TIMES 'Smart, sharp and very, very timely' I NEWSPAPER 'An important collection by a rising star' GUARDIAN 'Jemisin is now a pillar of speculative fiction, breathtakingly imaginative and narratively bold' ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY 'The most critically acclaimed author in contemporary science

fiction and fantasy' GQ 'One line from [Jemisin's introduction] has tattooed itself on my mind, a sort of manifesto for her ongoing work and all the fiction I love: 'Now I am bolder, and angrier, and more joyful.' I felt, after reading these stories, that I was too' NPR BOOKS 'N. K. Jemisin is a powerhouse of speculative fiction. So, obviously, you need to read this new short story collection' BUSTLE N. K. Jemisin is one of the most powerful and acclaimed speculative fiction authors of our time. In the first collection of her evocative short fiction, Jemisin equally challenges and delights readers with thought-provoking narratives of destruction, rebirth, and redemption. In these stories, Jemisin sharply examines modern society, infusing magic into the mundane, and drawing deft parallels in the fantasy realms of her imagination. Dragons and hateful spirits haunt the flooded streets of New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. In a parallel universe, a utopian society watches our world, trying to learn from our mistakes. A black mother in the Jim Crow South must save her daughter from a fey offering impossible promises. And in the Hugo award-nominated short story The City Born Great, a young street kid fights to give birth to an old metropolis's soul. For more from N. K. Jemisin, check out: The Inheritance Trilogy The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms The Broken Kingdoms The Kingdom of Gods Dreamblood Duology The Killing Moon The Shadowed Sun The Broken Earth The Fifth Season The Obelisk Gate The Stone Sky

afrofuturism a history of black futures: *Dark Matter* Sheree R. Thomas, 2004-01-02 *Dark Matter* is the first and only series to bring together the works of black SF and fantasy writers. The first volume was featured in the New York Times, which named it a Notable Book of the Year.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Infinitum Tim Fielder, 2021-01-19 Afrofuturism, a movement that began in the Black community during the early 20th Century as an escape from racial hostility, economic turmoil, and aggressive policing, is enjoying a renaissance witnessed by the record-breaking success of creative projects, including the Oscar-winning Marvel Studios film, *Black Panther*; Regina King's Emmy-winning HBO superhero tale, *Watchmen*; Janelle Monae's hit album, *Dirty Computer*; Jordan Peele's provocative feature *Get Out*; Octavia Butler's famed science fiction novel, *Kindred*; and Beyonce's visual album *Black Is King*. Now comes Afrofuturist Tim Fielder's beautifully written and rendered *INFINITUM*. In *INFINITUM*, King Aja Qba and Queen Lewa are revered across the African continent for their impressive political and military skills. Yet the future of their kingdom is in jeopardy, for the royal couple do not have an heir of their own. When the King kidnaps his son born to a concubine, Obinrin, she curses Qba with the "gift" of immortality. After enjoying long, wonderful lives both, Queen Lewa and the crown prince die naturally, leaving the ageless bereaved King Qba heartbroken and alone. Taking advantage of Qba's vulnerability, enemy nations rise to power and kill the king - or so they think. King Aja Qba survives the fatal attack, finally realizing the bitter fruit of Obinrin's curse. For millennia, the immortal Qba wanders the earth, mourning his lost subjects and searching for a new kingdom. His journey leads him across time, allowing him to witness the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the New World, and the American Civil Rights Movement. The expansion of global technology brings about intergalactic travel, first contact with an alien species, and conflicts within and ultimately outside the known universe. Thrust into these seminal events, Qba, now known by many as "John," faces harrowing decisions that will determine mankind's physical and spiritual trajectory. In 280 plus stunningly emotional and evocative full-color images, *INFINITUM* presents a unique cosmic experience, addressing issues of racism, classism, gender inequity, the encroachment of technology and the spiritual cost of war, while exposing the history behind ancient mysteries.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Sun Ra's Chicago William Sites, 2021-01-11 "Sites provides crucial context on how Chicago's Afrocentrist philosophy, religion, and jazz scenes helped turn Blount into Sun Ra." —Chicago Reader Sun Ra (1914–93) was one of the most wildly prolific and unfailingly eccentric figures in the history of music. Renowned for extravagant performances in which his Arkestra appeared in neo-Egyptian garb, the keyboardist and bandleader also espoused an interstellar cosmology that claimed the planet Saturn as his true home. In *Sun Ra's Chicago*, William Sites brings this visionary musician back to earth—specifically to the city's South Side, where from 1946 to 1961 he lived and relaunched his career. The postwar South Side was a hotbed of

unorthodox religious and cultural activism: Afrocentric philosophies flourished, storefront prophets sold “dream-book bibles,” and Elijah Muhammad was building the Nation of Islam. It was also an unruly musical crossroads where the man then known as Sonny Blount drew from an array of intellectual and musical sources—from radical nationalism, revisionist Christianity, and science fiction to jazz, blues, Latin dance music, and pop exotica—to construct a philosophy and performance style that imagined a new identity and future for African Americans. Sun Ra’s Chicago shows that late twentieth-century Afrofuturism emerged from a deep, utopian engagement with the city—and that by excavating the postwar black experience of Sun Ra’s South Side milieu, we can come to see the possibilities of urban life in new ways. “Four stars . . . Sites makes the engaging argument that the idiosyncratic jazz legend’s penchant for interplanetary journeys and African American utopia was in fact inspired by urban life right on Earth.” —Spectrum Culture

afrofuturism a history of black futures: A Pure Solar World Paul Youngquist, 2016-10-25 Sun Ra said he came from Saturn. Known on earth for his inventive music and extravagant stage shows, he pioneered free-form improvisation in an ensemble setting with the devoted band he called the “Arkestra.” Sun Ra took jazz from the inner city to outer space, infusing traditional swing with far-out harmonies, rhythms, and sounds. Described as the father of Afrofuturism, Sun Ra created “space music” as a means of building a better future for American blacks here on earth. *A Pure Solar World: Sun Ra and the Birth of Afrofuturism* offers a spirited introduction to the life and work of this legendary but underappreciated musician, composer, and poet. Paul Youngquist explores and assesses Sun Ra’s wide-ranging creative output—music, public preaching, graphic design, film and stage performance, and poetry—and connects his diverse undertakings to the culture and politics of his times, including the space race, the rise of technocracy, the civil rights movement, and even space-age bachelor-pad music. By thoroughly examining the astro-black mythology that Sun Ra espoused, Youngquist masterfully demonstrates that he offered both a holistic response to a planet desperately in need of new visions and vibrations and a new kind of political activism that used popular culture to advance social change. In a nation obsessed with space and confused about race, Sun Ra aimed not just at assimilation for the socially disfranchised but even more at a wholesale transformation of American society and a more creative, egalitarian world.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Janelle Monáe's Queer Afrofuturism Dan Hassler-Forest, 2022-05-13 Singer. Dancer. Movie star. Activist. Queer icon. Afrofuturist. Working class heroine. Time traveler. Prophet. Feminist. Android. Dirty Computer. Janelle Monáe is all these things and more, making her one of the most fascinating artists to emerge in the twenty-first century. This provocative new study explores how Monáe’s work has connected different media platforms to strengthen and enhance new movements in art, theory, and politics. It considers not only Monáe’s groundbreaking albums *The ArchAndroid*, *The Electric Lady*, and *Dirty Computer*, but also Monáe’s work as an actress in such films as *Hidden Figures* and *Antebellum*, as well as her soundtrack appearances in socially-engaged projects ranging from *I May Destroy You* to *Us*. Examining Monáe as a cultural icon whose work is profoundly intersectional, this book maps how she is actively reshaping discourses around race, gender, sexuality, and capitalism. Tracing Monáe’s performances of joy, desire, pain, and hope across a wide range of media forms, it shows how she imagines Afrofuturist, posthumanist, and postcapitalist utopias, while remaining grounded in the realities of being a Black woman in a white-dominated industry. This is an exciting introduction to an audacious innovator whose work offers us fresh ways to talk about identity, desire, and power.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: The Comet W. E. B. Du Bois, 2021-06-08 *The Comet* (1920) is a science fiction story by W. E. B. Du Bois. Written while the author was using his role at *The Crisis*, the official magazine of the NAACP, to publish emerging black artists of the Harlem Renaissance, *The Comet* is a pioneering work of speculative fiction which imagines a catastrophic event not only decimating New York City, but bringing an abrupt end to white supremacy. “How silent the street was! Not a soul was stirring, and yet it was high-noon—Wall Street? Broadway? He glanced almost wildly up and down, then across the street, and as he looked, a sickening horror froze in his limbs.” Sent to the vault to retrieve some old records, bank messenger Jim Davis

emerges to find a city descended into chaos. A comet has passed overhead, spewing toxic fumes into the atmosphere. All of lower Manhattan seems frozen in time. It takes him a few moments to see the bodies, piled into doorways and strewn about the eerily quiet streets. When he comes to his senses, he finds a wealthy woman asking for help. Soon, it becomes clear that they could very well be the last living people in the planet, that the fate of civilization depends on their ability to come together, not as black and white, but as two human beings. But how far will this acknowledgment take them? With a beautifully designed cover and professionally typeset manuscript, this edition of W. E. B. Du Bois' *The Comet* is a classic work of African American literature reimagined for modern readers.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Posthuman Blackness and the Black Female Imagination Kristen Lillvis, 2017-09-01 *Posthuman Blackness and the Black Female Imagination* examines the future-oriented visions of black subjectivity in works by contemporary black women writers, filmmakers, and musicians, including Toni Morrison, Octavia Butler, Julie Dash, and Janelle Monáe. In this innovative study, Kristen Lillvis supplements historically situated conceptions of blackness with imaginative projections of black futures. This theoretical approach allows her to acknowledge the importance of history without positing a purely historical origin for black identities. The authors considered in this book set their stories in the past yet use their characters, particularly women characters, to show how the potential inherent in the future can inspire black authority and resistance. Lillvis introduces the term "posthuman blackness" to describe the empowered subjectivities black women and men develop through their simultaneous existence within past, present, and future temporalities. This project draws on posthuman theory—an area of study that examines the disrupted unities between biology and technology, the self and the outer world, and, most important for this project, history and potentiality—in its readings of a variety of imaginative works, including works of historical fiction such as Gayl Jones's *Corregidora* and Morrison's *Beloved*. Reading neo-slave narratives through posthuman theory reveals black identity and culture as temporally flexible, based in the potential of what is to come and the history of what has occurred.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Hardears Matthew Clarke, Nigel Lynch, 2021-05-11 *Barbadian folklore meets superheroes in this Afro-Caribbean fantasy adventure story—now in paperback Hardears is an Afro-Caribbean fantasy adventure graphic novel by Matthew Clarke and Nigel Lynch. The story takes place in an alternative world on Jouvert Island—a magical analog of the island of Barbados, and begins when a superstorm of unprecedented strength obliterates the island, leaving it totally defenseless. As the island reels from the devastation, Mr. Hardin, the head of the Merchant Guild, charges in and promises to rebuild the economy of the island by creating jobs in his giant corporation. However, it's soon discovered that Hardin is a parasite and is capturing people from the island and using their life essence, or vibes, to feed his factories. Bolo, a local hero, saves his love Zahrah from Hardin and his cronies, but the lovers are then framed as rebels against the state. The state has been compromised by the factories, and the workers who know the truth about Hardin must go into hiding. If Bolo, Zahrah, and their allies don't take down Hardin and the corrupt government, all will be lost. Together, they must find the strength of their island and ancestors to fight the evil forces that have taken over their homeland.*

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Assembling a Black Counter Culture DeForrest Brown, 2020-11-10 In this critical history, DeForrest Brown, Jr makes techno Black again by tracing the music's origins in Detroit and beyond In *Assembling a Black Counter Culture*, writer and musician DeForrest Brown, Jr, provides a history and critical analysis of techno and adjacent electronic music such as house and electro, showing how the genre has been shaped over time by a Black American musical sensibility. Brown revisits Detroit's 1980s techno scene to highlight pioneering groups like the Belleville Three before jumping into the origins of today's international club floor to draw important connections between industrialized labor systems and cultural production. Among the other musicians discussed are Underground Resistance (Mad Mike Banks, Cornelius Harris), Drexciya, Juan Atkins (Cybotron, Model 500), Derrick May, Jeff Mills, Robert Hood, Detroit Escalator Co. (Neil Olliviera), DJ Stingray/Urban Tribe, Eddie Fowlkies, Terrence Dixon (Population One) and Carl Craig. With references to Theodore Roszak's *Making of a Counter*

Culture, writings by African American autoworker and political activist James Boggs, and the techno rebels of Alvin Toffler's Third Wave, Brown approaches techno's unique history from a Black theoretical perspective in an effort to evade and subvert the racist and classist status quo in the mainstream musical-historical record. The result is a compelling case to make techno Black again. DeForrest Brown, Jr is a New York-based theorist, journalist and curator. He produces digital audio and extended media as Speaker Music and is a representative of the Make Techno Black Again campaign.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Boogie Down Predictions Roy Christopher, 2022-09-13 Essays that explore the connections between time, representation, and identity within hip-hop culture. This book, edited by Roy Christopher, is a moment. It is the deconstructed sample, the researched lyrical metaphors, the aha moment on the way to hip-hop enlightenment. Hip-hop permeates our world, and yet it is continually misunderstood. Hip-hop's intersections with Afrofuturism and science fiction provide fascinating touchpoints that enable us to see our todays and tomorrows. This book can be, for the curious, a window into a hip-hop-infused Alter Destiny--a journey whose spaceship you embarked on some time ago. Are you engaging this work from the gaze of the future? Are you the data thief sailing into the past to U-turn to the now? Or are you the unborn child prepping to build the next universe? No, you're the superhero. Enjoy the journey.--from the introduction by Ytasha L. Womack Through essays by some of hip-hop's most interesting thinkers, theorists, journalists, writers, emcees, and DJs, Boogie Down Predictions embarks on a quest to understand the connections between time, representation, and identity within hip-hop culture and what that means for the culture at large. Introduced by Ytasha L. Womack, author of Afrofuturism: The World of Black Sci-Fi and Fantasy Culture, this book explores these temporalities, possible pasts, and further futures from a diverse, multilayered, interdisciplinary perspective.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: The Intuitionist Colson Whitehead, 2012-05-23 This debut novel by the two time Pulitzer Prize-winning author of The Underground Railroad and The Nickel Boys wowed critics and readers everywhere and marked the debut of an important American writer. Nominated as one of America's best-loved novels by PBS's The Great American Read. It is a time of calamity in a major metropolitan city's Department of Elevator Inspectors, and Lila Mae Watson, the first black female elevator inspector in the history of the department, is at the center of it. There are two warring factions within the department: the Empiricists, who work by the book and dutifully check for striations on the winch cable and such; and the Intuitionists, who are simply able to enter the elevator cab in question, meditate, and intuit any defects. Lila Mae is an Intuitionist and, it just so happens, has the highest accuracy rate in the entire department. But when an elevator in a new city building goes into total freefall on Lila Mae's watch, chaos ensues. It's an election year in the Elevator Guild, and the good-old-boy Empiricists would love nothing more than to assign the blame to an Intuitionist. But Lila Mae is never wrong. The sudden appearance of excerpts from the lost notebooks of Intuitionism's founder, James Fulton, has also caused quite a stir. The notebooks describe Fulton's work on the black box, a perfect elevator that could reinvent the city as radically as the first passenger elevator did when patented by Elisha Otis in the nineteenth century. When Lila Mae goes underground to investigate the crash, she becomes involved in the search for the portions of the notebooks that are still missing and uncovers a secret that will change her life forever. Look for Colson Whitehead's new novel, Crook Manifesto, coming soon!

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Rayla 2212 Ytasha Womack, 2014-05-22 RAYLA 2212 follows Rayla Illmatic, a third generation citizen of Planet Hope, a former Earth colony that has claimed its independence. But the utopian world has turned upside down and Rayla is on a quest to right the wrongs and end the rule of the Dirk. After her lover, and rebel leader Carcine disappears on a mission to find mystical scientist Moulan Shakur, Rayla embarks on a journey to complete it. She soon finds herself on a journey to find The Missing, a group of New Age Astronauts who were lost in the teleport project. But all isn't what it seems in this world where time and space shift at will. This story ties reincarnation, space travel, virtual worlds and love. As Rayla discovers new

worlds, she comes to discover herself and her power.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Hello, Moto Nnedi Okorafor, 2011-11-02 Nnedi Okorafor's Hello, Moto has been adapted by C.J. Obasi into the short film Hello, Rain. There is witchcraft in science and a science to witchcraft. Both will conspire against you eventually in Okorafor's dark fantasy tale, A Tor.com Original. At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Techno-Orientalism David S. Roh, Betsy Huang, Greta A. Niu, 2015-04-17 What will the future look like? To judge from many speculative fiction films and books, from Blade Runner to Cloud Atlas, the future will be full of cities that resemble Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Shanghai, and it will be populated mainly by cold, unfeeling citizens who act like robots. Techno-Orientalism investigates the phenomenon of imagining Asia and Asians in hypo- or hyper-technological terms in literary, cinematic, and new media representations, while critically examining the stereotype of Asians as both technologically advanced and intellectually primitive, in dire need of Western consciousness-raising. The collection's fourteen original essays trace the discourse of techno-orientalism across a wide array of media, from radio serials to cyberpunk novels, from Sax Rohmer's Dr. Fu Manchu to Firefly. Applying a variety of theoretical, historical, and interpretive approaches, the contributors consider techno-orientalism a truly global phenomenon. In part, they tackle the key question of how these stereotypes serve to both express and assuage Western anxieties about Asia's growing cultural influence and economic dominance. Yet the book also examines artists who have appropriated techno-orientalist tropes in order to critique racist and imperialist attitudes. Techno-Orientalism is the first collection to define and critically analyze a phenomenon that pervades both science fiction and real-world news coverage of Asia. With essays on subjects ranging from wartime rhetoric of race and technology to science fiction by contemporary Asian American writers to the cultural implications of Korean gamers, this volume offers innovative perspectives and broadens conventional discussions in Asian American Cultural studies.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Afrofuturism Rising Isiah Lavender III, 2019-10-09 Reexamines canonical African American literary texts as science fiction, applying the narrative practice of afrofuturism in order to better understand the black experience in America.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Brown Girl in the Ring Nalo Hopkinson, 2000-10-01 In this impressive debut from award-winning speculative fiction author Nalo Hopkinson, a young woman must solve the tragic mystery surrounding her family and bargain with the gods to save her city and herself. (The Washington Post) The rich and privileged have fled the city, barricaded it behind roadblocks, and left it to crumble. The inner city has had to rediscover old ways -- farming, barter, herb lore. But now the monied need a harvest of bodies, and so they prey upon the helpless of the streets. With nowhere to turn, a young woman must open herself to ancient truths, eternal powers, and the tragic mystery surrounding her mother and grandmother. She must bargain with gods, and give birth to new legends.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand Samuel R. Delany, 2004-12-15 The story of a truly galactic civilization with over 6,000 inhabited worlds.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: The City We Became N. K. Jemisin, 2020-03-24 Three-time Hugo Award-winning and New York Times bestselling author N.K. Jemisin crafts her most incredible novel yet, a glorious story of culture, identity, magic, and myths in contemporary New York City. In Manhattan, a young grad student gets off the train and realizes he doesn't remember who he is, where he's from, or even his own name. But he can sense the beating heart of the city, see its history, and feel its power. In the Bronx, a Lenape gallery director discovers strange graffiti scattered throughout the city, so beautiful and powerful it's as if the paint is literally calling to her. In Brooklyn, a politician and mother finds she can hear the songs of her city, pulsing to the beat of her Louboutin heels. And they're not the only ones. Every great city has a soul. Some are ancient as myths, and others are as new and destructive as children. New York? She's got six. For more from N. K. Jemisin, check out: The Inheritance Trilogy The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms The Broken Kingdoms The Kingdom of Gods The Inheritance Trilogy (omnibus edition) Shades in

Shadow: An Inheritance Triptych (e-only short fiction) The Awakened Kingdom (e-only novella) Dreamblood Duology The Killing Moon The Shadowed Sun The Dreamblood Duology (omnibus) The Broken Earth The Fifth Season The Obelisk Gate The Stone Sky How Long 'til Black Future Month? (short story collection) A glorious fantasy. —Neil Gaiman

afrofuturism a history of black futures: Kindred Octavia E. Butler, 2004-02-01 From the New York Times bestselling author of Parable of the Sower and MacArthur “Genius” Grant, Nebula, and Hugo award winner The visionary time-travel classic whose Black female hero is pulled through time to face the horrors of American slavery and explores the impacts of racism, sexism, and white supremacy then and now. “I lost an arm on my last trip home. My left arm.” Dana’s torment begins when she suddenly vanishes on her 26th birthday from California, 1976, and is dragged through time to antebellum Maryland to rescue a boy named Rufus, heir to a slaveowner’s plantation. She soon realizes the purpose of her summons to the past: protect Rufus to ensure his assault of her Black ancestor so that she may one day be born. As she endures the traumas of slavery and the soul-crushing normalization of savagery, Dana fights to keep her autonomy and return to the present. Blazing the trail for neo-slavery narratives like Colson Whitehead’s The Underground Railroad and Ta-Nehisi Coates’s The Water Dancer, Butler takes one of speculative fiction’s oldest tropes and infuses it with lasting depth and power. Dana not only experiences the cruelties of slavery on her skin but also grimly learns to accept it as a condition of her own existence in the present. “Where stories about American slavery are often gratuitous, reducing its horror to explicit violence and brutality, Kindred is controlled and precise” (New York Times). “Reading Octavia Butler taught me to dream big, and I think it’s absolutely necessary that everybody have that freedom and that willingness to dream.” —N. K. Jemisin Developed for television by writer/executive producer Branden Jacobs-Jenkins (Watchmen), executive producers also include Joe Weisberg and Joel Fields (The Americans, The Patient), and Darren Aronofsky (The Whale). Janicza Bravo (Zola) is director and an executive producer of the pilot. Kindred stars Mallori Johnson, Micah Stock, Ryan Kwanten, and Gayle Rankin.

afrofuturism a history of black futures: The Rainmaker's Mistake Erna Brodber, 2007 Depicts in fiction the spirit of the past by exploring how the formerly enslaved of Jamaica handle their freedom and arrive at understandings of issues and processes concerning their settlement and diaspora.

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