Cobalt Poets Series # 555 ~ January 3, 2023 ~ Sounds of Jazz Painting by Roman Nogin

JAZZ ORIGIN SELF

A.K. Toney

Am a jazz player
Player forward on
Bringing swing back home
Straight ahead zone (twice)

My Jazz was a transference of energy
From spirit hands that rode horse and felt the needles
It was handed like wooden stick and spark from sound of metal
The bell left a timing in me that gave Griot to poetry

It clapped like slaps from palm to tight animal skin
It rang as twangs from ngoni strings singing melody
It swings rapidly as brushes to sock hat from snare wear
We were on wax before vinyl with no origin of difference

It came from keys on saxophone pushing me as horn to high
It came from those traps like nigger boys need to beat things
It came from that cool cigarette between fingers after laying hand on instruments
The testimony was a sermon, that was more than holy
It was a club ceremony of sanctuary

The sanctified gave house and put their hands together praising
They smoke papa loco as itations
They drank libations in honor of the sound
They speak easy in a house of Juke Swing big band quartet
Blues given like communion sloe gin...

Come from a place where they line up at Church
To listen for an Arkestra because they couldn't hear the piano Saturday night
Came to the crossroads of music when predecessors passed on...
Had to pay homage to Ancestors by playing own rhythms
With the stories of them validating legacy

A. K. Toney is a Griot, writer, and educator. He currently is a Literacy Coordinator, Artist teacher and owner of Reading Is Poetry. He is currently working on his first book and album chronicling his life as a poet in the Leimert Park Village area in Los Angeles, CA. As a Griot Toney has learned the art of storytelling while playing percussion instruments. He often deeply emerges himself into rhythms of African Oral Tradition and Jazz from a modern urban perspective. A.K. follows the role of the Griot singing and playing the message, loving, and respecting the people.