

**Jaki Shelton Green** was selected as the first NC Piedmont Laureate in 2009. She is the 2003 recipient of the North Carolina Award for Literature and the 2007 Sam Ragan Award. Her publications (Carolina Wren Press) include *Dead on Arrival*, *Dead on Arrival* and *New Poems, Masks, Conjure Blues, singing a tree into dance*, and *breath of the song*. She is author of *Blue Opal*, a play. She travels extensively as a creativity coach and poet, performing throughout the United States, Europe, the Caribbean Islands, and Central and South America.

### For My Brother

When the son sings good morning  
to his sister  
it is with the whisper  
of funeral gloves  
the fragrance of  
lost memories  
the patience  
of burning fields

When the son sings good morning  
to his mother  
it is with the lessons  
of well worn shoes  
a certain hunger  
that begins behind his eyelids.

unrehearsed dances  
signal a father's return  
signal a sky of winter.

When the son remembers other mornings  
it is with the torn tongues of war  
the breath of the desert child still moist  
like the dew in his dreams.

When the son remembers the death of orchids  
it is beneath a quiet Sudanese sky  
that hears the closing of the child's eyes  
rain messengers ascend.

unrehearsed dances  
signal a father's return