

## ***Reviews of Antebellum Dream Book***



Listed as one of “Our 25 Favorite Books of 2001” by the ***Village Voice***

“*Antebellum Dream Book* sports the page-turning pull of a good story, the intimacy of personal verse, and an unforced braininess that so few smart poets can get right.” —**Jace Clayton, *The Washington Post Book World***

“Fans of Alexander’s debut, *The Venus Hottentot*, have been waiting for something this good from her: here it is.” —***Publishers Weekly, starred review***

“In narratives sweetened by the lyric pulse and pierced through by felicitous turns of irony, Alexander chronicles the world of ‘black and tan.’ Her poems bristle with the irresistible quality of a world seen fresh. Race is present in her poems in the way that sex, class, age, even weather are present in all of our lives.”

—**Rita Dove, “Poets Choice,” *The Washington Post***

“Alexander, an African-American, explores tensions inherent in gender and race and expresses the ambivalence of motherhood in jazz-inflected tones.” —***ELLE***

“A beauty, musical but restrained as each word, each note, releases its full range of sound and meaning.” —***Booklist***

“*Antebellum Dream Book* moves as if Alexander breathlessly awoke in the middle of the night and jotted down her somnolent wanderings in verse form.”

—***Village Voice Literary Supplement***

“These poems of personal history are so particular in their rendering and so precisely made that they often transcend the poet’s private domain and stand beautifully for the human condition in all its glory and tragedy. In other words, Alexander has an instinct for turning her profound cultural vision into one that illuminates universal experience.” —***Clarence Major***

“Elizabeth Alexander’s new book—her best yet—uses the structure of dreams to meditate about the strangeness of race, the mysteries of family, the centrality of African American precursors, and the excitements—the estrangements—of motherhood. What joy to have this book of birthings that burns with a radiant black light.” —***Edward Hirsch***