

SAEED JONES

“Jones is the kind of writer who's more than wanted: he's desperately needed.” —FlavorWire

Saeed Jones is an essential author as well as a powerful voice in the world of literary activism, and his writing often engages the questions and nuances of identity. He has shaped his platform into a tool for social awareness, breakthroughs and connections with his no-holds-barred personality and unforgettable voice. *Vibe Check*, the weekly news and culture podcast he hosts with Sam Sanders and Zach Stafford, has been lauded as one of the Best Podcasts of the Year by the New York Times, Vogue, and CBC Radio.

Saeed was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and grew up in Lewisville, Texas. His debut poetry collection, *Prelude to Bruise*, was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and was awarded the 2015 PEN/Joyce Osterweil Award for Poetry. The collection also received a starred review in Publishers Weekly, which described the book as, “a fever dream, something akin to magic.” NPR described *Prelude* as a “book seamed in smoke; it is a dance that invites you to admire the supple twist of its narrative spine; it is hard and glaring and brilliant.”

In 2019, Saeed released his highly anticipated memoir, *How We Fight for Our Lives*. NPR raved “Jones’s voice and sensibility are so distinct that he turns one of the oldest of literary genres inside out and upside down.” The memoir won the 2019 Kirkus Prize for Nonfiction, a 2020 Lambda Literary Award, as well as a 2020 Stonewall Book Award.

His most recent collection, *Alive at the End of the World*, was published in 2022 and awarded the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for Poetry. The New Yorker says, “Jones unravels and reconfigures language like he’s untying a knot, then rethreads the strands in a delicate new construction.” They also added this to their “Best Books of 2022” list. Poet Rita Dove calls the book “an aching reminder that a queer Black man leads a meta existence; he cannot live without thinking about living, constantly negotiating the everyday with an eye to the peril that can intrude at any time, from police violence to the minutest reactions from highbrow bigots.” The collection was also a finalist for both the 2023 Lambda Literary Award in Gay Poetry and the Publishing Triangle 2023 Thom Gunn Award for Gay Poetry.