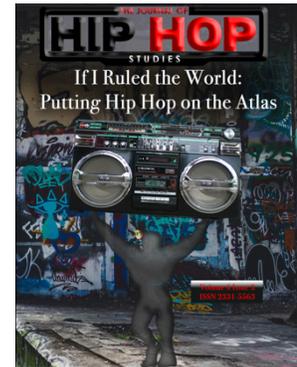

Dedication to Ikeogu Oke

Travis Harris

Journal of Hip Hop Studies, Special Issue *If I Ruled the World:
Putting Hip Hop on the Atlas*

Volume 6, Issue 2, Winter 2019, pp. 4 - 5

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34718/bt7y-bg27>



My Epitaph

“Here lies a man who loved virtue and art,
And gave to both his fortunes and his heart.”

Ikeogu Oke
(1967 - 2018)

This special issue is dedicated to Ikeogu Oke. The *Journal of Hip Hop Studies* recognizes the weight of publishing his poems on Tupac posthumously. He transitioned on November 25, 2018 during the process of bringing together this special issue. He wrote “My Epitaph” as a Facebook post on September 16, 2018. As his epitaph stated, he was passionate about art. Born in Nigeria, he went to the University of Calabar and obtained a BA in English and Literary Studies. He then went on to obtain an MA in Literary Studies from the University of Nigeria. Among his many accomplishments, in 2017, Oke won the Nigeria Prize for Literature for his book of epic poetry, *The Heresiad*. “If I Ruled the World” contains ten poems written by Oke. They are placed throughout the issue.

In Oke’s note on “Good Thing Going” in this special issue he stated: “I had imagined that it would be the type of poem Tupac himself would write if he were to write a formal poem/musical piece, with his characteristic bluntness and unabashedly mirroring the seamy side of our humanity, and which he would like to render as a song with the verve usually associated with rap or hip-hop.” His own words portray the beautiful struggles of African and African diasporic life that he had aimed to communicate in his own poetry. His poems elucidate the ways in which Hip Hop communicates and embodies the evasiveness of freedom for Black people around the world. Oke, from Nigeria, and Tupac, from America, were separated by a vast body of water in the Atlantic, yet they have this shared experience of being African people in the ongoing fight against White Supremacy. They both are our ancestors now and we hope that this special issue will honor their work and legacies.



*In Loving Memory and Dedication to Ikeogu Oke
(1967 - 2018)*