

Mumia Abu-Jamal: Long Distance Revolutionary

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an award-winning journalist and author of ten books— *Live from Death Row* (Harper Perennial, 1995), *Death Blossoms* (Common Notions, 1996), *All Things Censored* (Seven Stories, 2000), *Faith of Our Fathers* (Africa World Press, 2003), *We Want Freedom* (Common Notions, 2004), *Jailhouse Lawyers* (City Lights, 2009), *The Classroom and the Cell* (Third World Press, 2011), *Writing on the Wall* (City Lights, 2015), *Have Black Lives Ever Mattered* (City Lights 2016) *Murder Inc.* (2018). For the past 36 years, he has been a resident of the Pennsylvania State Prison System. Twenty-nine of those years were spent in solitary confinement on death row.

Prior to his incarceration, he was an award-winning broadcast journalist. In 1981, he was elected president of the Association of Black Journalists (Philadelphia chapter) and was a radio reporter for NPR. As part of a team of reporters at WHYI, one of NPR's premier stations, he won the prestigious Major Armstrong Award from Columbia University for excellence in broadcasting. His 1982 murder trial has raised considerable protest internationally. His demand for a new trial and freedom is supported by heads of state from France to South Africa, by the European Parliament, by distinguished human rights organizations like Amnesty International, city governments from Detroit to San Francisco to Paris, and by Nobel Laureates Nelson Mandela, Toni Morrison, and Desmond Tutu.

Abu-Jamal obtained his GED in prison in July of 1992; he earned his BA from Goddard College in January of 1996; he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Law degree from the New College of California in May of 1996; in 1999, he earned a Masters of Arts degree from California State University Dominguez Hills [MA Humanities History (major) African American Literature (minor)]. He is working on his Ph.D.

His books include best sellers. They have been translated into more than seven languages including French, Japanese, German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian.

Mumia Abu-Jamal has written and broadcasted more than 2,500 essays from prison, including commencement addresses and lectures. He is currently serving a life sentence without parole at the State Correctional Institute at Mahanoy in Frackville, Pennsylvania.

On March 31st, 2015, he was rushed to the hospital with a critical medical emergency. His family, supporters, and lawyers, are working 24/7 to see that he gets life sustaining medical care, a battle that has not yet been won. The case *Abu-Jamal v Kerestes* seeks to secure medical treatment for Mr. Abu-Jamal and set a precedent others facing abuse in the prison system. For more information, visit <http://www.prisonradio.org/mumia101>

Excerpts from the treatment for the movie “Mumia Long Distance Revolutionary” www.mumia-themovie.com

Life After Incarceration...is a look at how and why Mumia transcends and exposes America’s Prison Industrial Complex. He embodies a voice that has been repressed but continues to expose the facts of this Draconian system: one in three black men will do prison time; one in forty---six Americans will do prison time; America has the highest incarceration rate in the world. In fact, Mumia’s existence after incarceration is characterized by his courage as he refuses to be silent. He refuses to stop writing and stop reporting. As the story drives forward, the narrative shines a bright light on Mumia as a political and revolutionary force that rises out of an American nightmare. Even though the state tries to prevent his words from reaching the airwaves, he finds connection and life beyond the tyranny. The battle lines were clearly drawn with the State mobilizing vast resources... but for the most part Mumia wins as his voice soars far beyond prison walls, as his books hit the streets and his voice hits the airwaves.

Impact on Political Discourse...is a look at how Mumia connects with those outside the gulag... how he inspires hope, courage, and change. In fact, his work from prison continues to make a significant impact on an amazing variety of people from Detroit to Uzbekistan as they discover his essays or hear his voice – even as the State continues their attempts to silence him.

The story makes its way through the end of the 20th Century defining Mumia as a stalwart critic of empire – a historian and dissident who embodies, exemplifies, and represents those voices ignored and discarded by the mainstream ruling class... a writer who speaks for the poor, the disenfranchised, the wounded, and the dead. We witness the growth and the evolution of his writing – from a reporter to a noted historian. And not a safe or guild historian; his words are in the tradition of Chomsky, Zinn, and Arundhati Roy. Ultimately, his words are a check on American exceptionalism. Mumia: Long Distance Revolutionary the film illustrates how Mumia has inspired thousands of educators to teach his words... how students respond to his plea for peace, for hope, and always for compassion.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT MUMIA ABU--JAMAL

"I was fortunate to grow up in a community in which it was apparent that our lives mattered. This memory is the antidote to the despair that seizes one of my generation when we hear the words 'Black Lives Matter.' We want to shout: Of course they do! To you, especially. In this brilliant, painful, factual and useful work, we see to whom our lives have not mattered: the profit driven Euro-Americans who enslaved and worked our ancestors to death within a few years, then murdered them and bought replacements. Many of these ancestors are buried beneath Wall Street. Mumia Abu-Jamal's painstaking courage, truth-telling, and disinterest in avoiding the reality of American racial life is, as always, honorable."—Alice Walker

"Mumia Abu Jamal's clarion call for justice and defiance of state oppression has never dimmed, despite his decades of being shackled and caged. He is one of our nation's most valiant revolutionaries and courageous intellectuals."—Chris Hedges, Pulitzer-prize winning journalist and author of *Wages of Rebellion: The Moral Imperative of Revolt*

"Prophet, critic, historian, witness . . . Mumia Abu-Jamal is one of the most insightful and consequential intellectuals of our era. These razor sharp reflections on racialized state violence in America are the fire and the memory our movements need right now."
—Robin D. G. Kelley, author of *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*

"Prison and government officials are trying to censor and silence Mumia Abu--Jamal. I stand as one of many Americans who believe that there is tremendous value in his voice being heard." ↓ —□ Susan Sarandon

"Solitary Confinement is simply torture. It has been well known for a long time. It is savagery. Mass incarceration is an incredible crime. All of these things are a true international scandal. He (Mumia's) is a striking case, but it is far more general. Maximum security prisons in the United States are horrendous. They make Guantanamo look like a vacation resort." — Noam Chomsky, Professor MIT

"If Mumia Abu--Jamal has nothing important to say, why are so many powerful people trying to kill him and shut him up?" — John Edgar Wideman, Professor, Brown University

"A prophetic writer. Mumia refuses to allow his spirit to be broken by the forces of injustice; his language glows with an affirming flame." — Jonathan Kozol, Educator

"Mumia is a dramatic example of how the criminal justice system can be brought to bear on someone who is African American, articulate, and involved in change in society. The system is threatened by someone like Mumia. A voice as strong and as truthful as his— the repression against him is intensified." — Sister Helen Prejean

"We join with Amnesty International in demanding a new trial for Mumia Abu--Jamal. We will not allow his voice to be silenced." — Tom Morello, Rage Against The Machine

"The first time I heard a tape of Mumia's radio broadcasts, it was the first time I fully understood why the government was so intent on putting him to death."
— Assata Shakur, former member of The Black Panther Party

"Mumia Abu--Jamal offers us an important gift of insight and analysis and we must treasure it." — Susan L. Taylor, Editor in Chief Emeritus, Essence Magazine

"Uncompromising, disturbing... Abu--Jamal's voice has the clarity and candor of a man whose impending death emboldens him to say what is on his mind without fear of consequence." — The Boston Globe

"Abu--Jamal's words flow like the sap of trees, pulsing with energy and capturing the essence of life." — Library Journal

"An incisive critic of our criminal justice system... a rare and courageous voice."
— Martin Sheen