

While incarcerated, David Rice continued painting and writing and was allowed to leave prison several times in the 1970s to attend his art shows in Omaha.

In the 1980s, Rice took an African name, Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa,” which means “wild or natural man, child of the sun” drawn from the Kwanyama, Gikuyu, Ibibio and Hausa African languages, respectively. He preferred to be called “Mondo,” rather than have his name shortened to “Mondo we Langa.”

Mondo wrote short stories, poetry and was a columnist for the Lincoln Journal newspaper. He was a prolific poet and contributed poems and stories to such literary journals and magazines as Prairie Schooner, The Black Scholar, ARGO, Black American Literary Forum, Shooting Star Quarterly Review, Pacifica Review, Obsidian, Black Books Bulletin among dozens of others.

His poem, “Great Bateleur” was featured in “Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary,” by Walter Dean Myers (Scholastic, Inc. 1993).

Two of Mondo’s plays, “Different Dances,” and “We Dance in Our Neighborhood,” were performed by Ujima Youth Theater in Nebraska as well as in New York City.

Mondo was one of several co-authors along with Yosef-ben-Jochannan and John Henrik Clarke of “The Race: Matters Concerning Pan-African History, Culture and Genocide.” (Native Sun Publishers, 1992). He was a contributor to “Nebraska Voices,” an anthology commissioned by the Nebraska Humanities Council for the sesquicentennial of Nebraska statehood.

He was a leader in the Harambe Association and a mentor to many young men at the Nebraska State Penitentiary. At his funeral in March 2016, his brother remarked that Mondo’s prison sentence became a ministry where he was an enormously positive influence on young Black men who needed his counsel.

Mondo recorded a selection of his poems and essays on prisonradio.org which can be heard at <https://www.prisonradio.org/search/node/mondo>

Source: A defunct website, n2pp.info, hosted by the late Buddy Hogan, a longtime supporter.