

Here is a rare rendition of oral legend into the form of a novel—a historical as well as imaginative journey into the underworld of 1890s St. Louis. Told from the first-person point of view of Stagloee, legendary pimp, bad man, local hero, and the subject of ballads and stories for more than a century, this tale of murder and justice gives form to an archetype that has influenced black culture from jazz to hip-hop, country porches to inner-city basketball courts, and rebellious but earnest young men everywhere. Enter Stagloee’s world of women, wine, ragtime music, and the constant oppression of racist America, and any simple stereotype vanishes. Cecil Brown shows us a character with dignity, compassion, and unlimited style. See why “everybody talks ’bout Stagloee”.

"Cecil Brown's *I, Stagloee* puts the 'e' back in enjoyable and the 'e' back in elegance. A great novel."

—Melvin Van Peebles, film director of *Sweetback's Badass Song*

"I love the savvy, rich voice of the trickster-narrator of Cecil Brown's exciting new novel, *I, Stagloee*. Based on a celebrated historic tragedy, this novel promises to be Brown's best yet. By re-inventing the voice and persona of Stagloee himself—bad man, gambler and club owner—the story of all the infamous *et* colorful black players in this celebrated drama is up for a carefully researched and hilarious re-interpretation. With humor, zest, imagination and affection, Stagloee (storyteller and participant) tells us straight out who really shot whom and why. This is imaginative fiction at its best."

—Al Young, novelist and Poet Laureate of California (2006)

Cecil Brown, novelist and screenwriter, was educated at Columbia University (B.A.), University of Chicago (M.A.), and the University of California at Berkeley (Ph.D.). He is an Assistant Professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

