Kevin Young is widely regarded as one of the leading poets of his generation, one who finds meaning and inspiration in African American music, particularly the blues, and in the bittersweet history of Black America. His many books of poetry include Ardeche: A Chronicle of the Amistad Rebels (Knopf, 2011); Dear Darkness (Knopf, 2008); and For the Confederate Dead (2007). Black Maria: Poems Produced and Directed by Kevin Young is a "film noir in verse," a playful homage to the language and imagery of Hollywood detective films. The title, Black Maria, is vintage street slang for "police van" and "hearse," as well as the name of Thomas Edison's first film studio. The poems follow the adventures of two characters, the private eye AKA Jones, and the femme fatale Delilah Redbone, through "a maze of aliases and ambushes, sex and suspicions, fast talk and hard luck...." Young was a 1993 National Poetry Series winner for Most Way Home, which also received the John C. Zacharis First Book Award of Ploughshares magazine. Young is also the author of a nonfiction book, The Grey Album (Graywolf, 2012), winner of the Graywolf Press Nonfiction Prize. In 2013, Young won the PEN Open Book Award for The Grey Album. Judges said of this work, "Young goes far beyond just being a documentarian of American Black identity—he shows us how Black identity is indispensable to American culture."