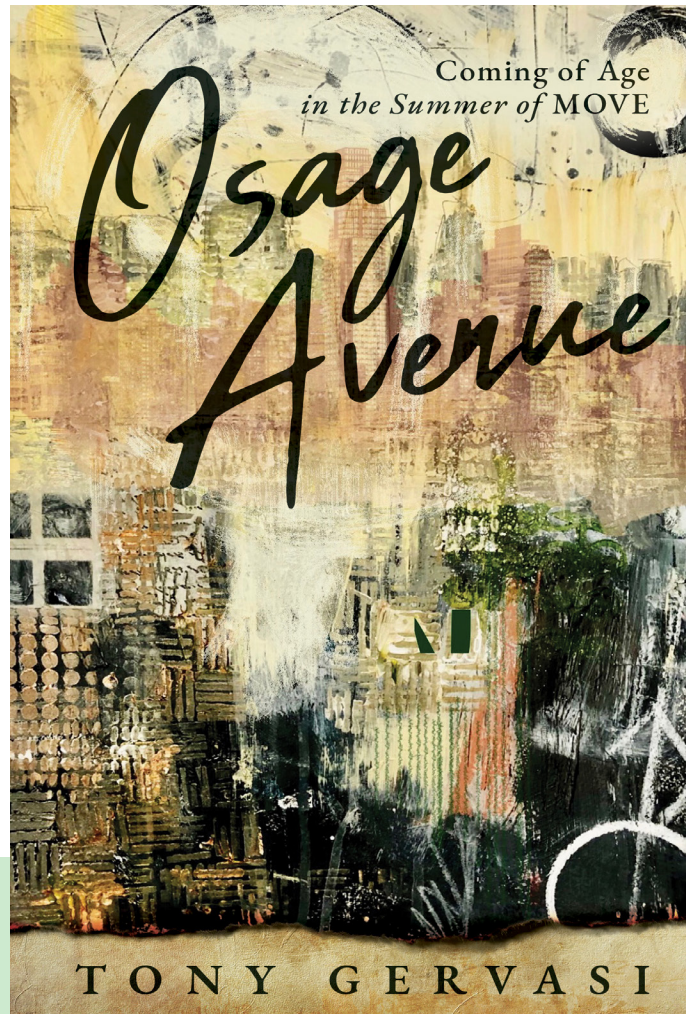


# OSAGE AVENUE

*Coming of Age in the Summer of MOVE*



Offered by  
Riddle Brook Publishing LLC  
Peterborough NH



[www.riddlebrookpublishing.com](http://www.riddlebrookpublishing.com)  
[mcharney@riddlebrookpublishing.com](mailto:mcharney@riddlebrookpublishing.com)

ISBN: 979-8-9859413-2-6 — \$17.00  
ISBN (ebook): 979-8-9859413-3-3 — \$11.99  
248 pages  
Available October 2022

# Tony Gervasi



Tony Gervasi is a writer from the Philadelphia area.

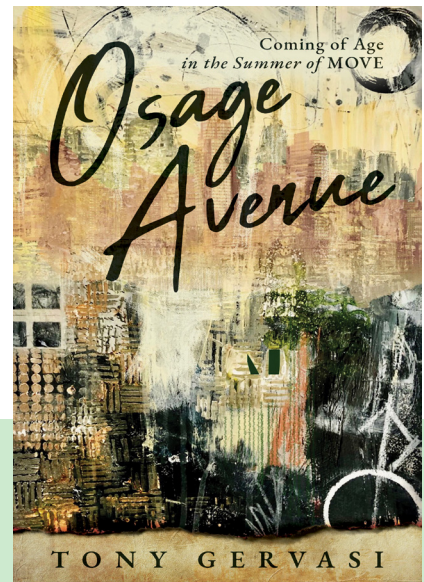
Growing up he spent much of his free time exploring the city and outlying areas. After high school he studied creative writing and worked as a reporter for several newspapers before moving to the U.S. Virgin Islands. Upon his return, he moved back to the Philadelphia suburbs.

Tony is a life-long martial arts enthusiast, and was the drummer in several rock bands. He now splits his time between the northeast and the Florida Keys, where he spends time with his wife Maureen and their three dogs.



“Osage Avenue is a harrowing story about growing up in West Philadelphia in the 1980s, a neighborhood still reeling from the MOVE Bombing. It is a story about finding hope within a disaster, and about the resonances of trauma, both personal and global. Osage Avenue captures what the Teachings of John Africa meant to everyday Philadelphians in the 1980, even to those who were not MOVE People themselves. This is a beautiful, challenging, gripping story that, like the MOVE Bombing itself, forces us to confront the systemic evils all around us to which we’ve become complacent.”

—*Richard Kent Evans, author of  
MOVE: An American Religion*

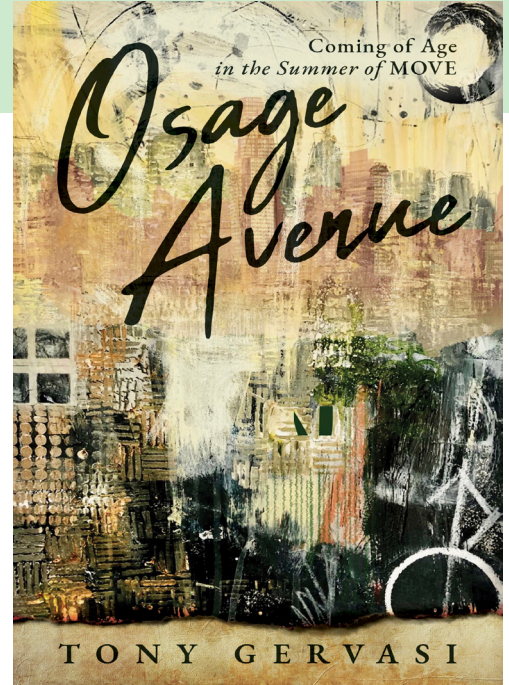


# Osage Avenue

Full Title: Osage Avenue: Coming of Age in the Summer of MOVE  
ISBN (Paper): 979-8-9859413-2-6  
Price (Paper): \$17.00  
ISBN (e-book): 979-8-9859413-3-3  
Price (e-book): \$11.99  
Formats: Trade Paper 8.25x5.5; EPUB; Kindle  
Page Count: 248  
Genre: Memoir; Coming of Age; Urban  
Distributor: Ingram  
Publication Date: October 11, 2022

“Though set in the summer of 1985 during Philadelphia’s MOVE bombing, Tony Gervasi’s *Osage Avenue* is profoundly topical. Tightly told and metaphorically rich, it’s a story of prisons - of economics, demographics, familial, guilt, and shame, and the paths we find to partial liberation.”

—Mike Freeman, author of  
*Neither Mountain nor River*



Riddle Brook Publishing LLC  
Peterborough NH 03458

[www.riddlebrookpublishing.com](http://www.riddlebrookpublishing.com)

ARC Requests to:

[mcharney@riddlebrookpublishing.com](mailto:mcharney@riddlebrookpublishing.com)

## About Riddle Brook Publishing

Riddle Brook Publishing, based in the beautiful Monadnock region of southern New Hampshire, is a full-service small press specializing in narrative non-fiction.

Established in 2011, the company has as its mission to provide opportunities for first-time authors who embrace the hands-on approach we provide.

As a full-service press, we cover all editorial, production and marketing costs. We do not charge our authors any fees, and we pay a small advance and ongoing royalties.



## Excerpt from *Osage Avenue*



*Rabbit rabbit.*

The rain of the night helped him sleep solidly for the first time in what seemed an eternity. Thoughts of his small victory the previous night came back to him, and he let them replay over and over. Bob pounding his fists into the door and wearing himself out, giving up. Smear blood, and the fact that the door was still there.

The rain had cleared and now the sun poured through the window, along with the steam. The familiar street voices prepared for the day.

The mattress stuck to his sweaty back, but he didn't care. Even though he had the day off from the zoo, he still woke up in a good mood. Most people enjoy their time off from work, but any time he spent at the house caused stress and could lead to an explosion. Even more so, Trigger didn't like leaving Sharon there for Bob to do whatever he wanted with her. But he didn't have the stomach to stay there and watch it either, so he took the coward's way out and left, just like that car full of black faces that rolled by when Will and Troy were crowding in on him.

The work clothes from yesterday hadn't yet dried, so he left them in the room where the heat pouring in from the open window would dry them soon enough. He didn't like leaving the house without them because that meant he had to come back again, but he didn't want to spend the day with wet clothes in his pack.

These were the things he had to think about on summer break, while other kids were only concerned with what they would be taking to the pool that day, and what friends they might see there.

Walking past the bathroom door smeared with Bob's blood made him smile, but that evaporated in an instant as he looked into the bedroom and saw her motionless, pinned beneath Bob's heavy arm. He snored so loudly she couldn't possibly have been sleeping, and Trigger was sure she was just lying there awake, paralyzed twice over. Just that arm draped over her stirred such an anger in him that he stepped into the room to pull it off, but froze, backing out quietly and slipping sheepishly down the stairs. One of the near-dead was still on the couch, sitting up either asleep or still so high he couldn't keep his eyes open. He sat there, filthy, fading into the brown fabric.

Even though it was still early, the humidity was already stifling. The black streets and red brick buildings siphoned in the heat, holding it so not a wisp of fresh air seemed to blow down Osage Avenue. The rowhouses closed in, towering over the black river of macadam, every one of them stuffed with losses and unease, victories and dreams.

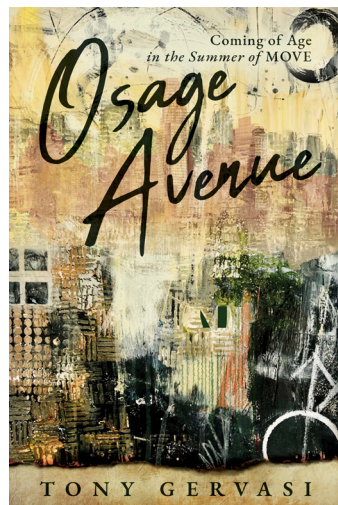
***“Thoughts of his small victory the previous night came back to him, and he let them replay over and over. Bob pounding his fists into the door and wearing himself out, giving up. Smear blood, and the fact that the door was still there.”***

Before Trigger even realized it, he had wandered back to the MOVE house. Most of the bigger debris were gone, but the ground was still thick with charred wood and ash; metal skeletons of wire and pipe were the only proof of prior lives. The tall brick walls that stood between each home were braced with wood to keep them from falling over, and the fresh tan wood stood out like bleached bone against the backdrop of the scorched earth.

Trigger again sat on the stoop across the street, staring into the past and thinking about the Rasta from the zoo he had seen the day before. He wanted to see him again, and he didn't even really know why. Something just felt unresolved. He did see Troy Thomas; the thick puffy afro and light skin made him noticeable from a block away. He was alone, without Will, which gave Trigger some relief. He walked by, on the dead side of the street, in front of the yellow caution tape. He looked right at Trigger but kept on going.

After minutes or hours, the owner of the home came out and politely told Trigger to get off his stoop. Trigger left and went to the library to get a few books on animals for both himself and Sharon, then spent the rest of the day wandering. Past the corner store where he always went, the same fixtures of locals passing time standing out front, scratching lottery tickets and smoking. Past the old ladies in the laundromat, sitting behind the metal screening that protects the large glass windows.

There were always people on the stoops of their homes and on the porches, some drinking beers as the music from their radios drifted down the block. Kids his age and younger, heading to the park, bouncing a basketball in the middle of the street then darting onto the sidewalk when a car came. Before the bombing, even the MOVE children would sometimes be out there, playing with neighborhood children in the street or in front yards, and sometimes at the park as well. There was constant activity, always people living their lives. It was a community, and still was, one he was part of whether he realized it or not.



***“Before the bombing, even the MOVE children would sometimes be out there, playing with neighborhood children in the street or in front yards, and sometimes at the park as well. There was constant activity, always people living their lives. It was a community, and still was, one he was part of whether he realized it or not.”***