Penn Press Books Recognized for Excellence

Mary Dzon’s *The Quest for the Christ Child in the Later Middle Ages* (2017) was named the recipient of 2021 Southeastern Medieval Association award for best first book.

*Occupied America* (2020) by Donald F Johnson won the 2021 Harry M. Ward Book Prize, granted by the American Revolution Round Table of Richmond.

*Captives of Liberty* (HC 2019, PB 2022 forthcoming) by T. Cole Jones was awarded an Honorable Mention for the 2021 Harry M. Ward Book Prize, granted by the American Revolution Round Table of Richmond. It was also awarded an Honorable Mention for the 2020 Colonel Richard W. Ulbrich Memorial Book Award, granted by the U.S. Military History Group.

*I’ve Been Here All the While* (2021) by Alaina Roberts was chosen as a Finalist for the 2022 Gilder Lehrman Lincoln Prize, granted by The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and Gettysburg College.

Congrats to Guggenheim Fellows!

The 2022 Guggenheim Fellows have been announced, and several Penn Press authors or affiliates have received this honor! Please join us in extending our warmest congratulations to:

- Jeffrey Masten, author of *Queer Philologies: Sex, Language, and Affect in Shakespeare’s Time* (HC 2016, PB 2018)
- Paul Saint-Amour, former Faculty Editorial Board Chair
- Jennifer Mittelstadt, coeditor of *The Military and the Market* (forthcoming 2022)

Penn Press welcomed Todor Grigorov to the Board of Trustees in March. Todor has many years of experience in not-for-profit scholarly publishing, particularly journals, and a strong finance background. He was CFO at the University of California Press and then the University of California Continuing Education of the Bar before becoming CFO at the Public Library of Science (PLOS), the world’s leading publisher of Open Access scientific research. “We are very excited to have Todor joining our Board,” said Penn Press Director Mary Francis. “His experience with some of the most innovative journal publishers in the world will be a great benefit as we expand our journals program, and his commitment to mission-driven publishing is a tremendous asset.”

Says Todor: “I am excited to join the University of Pennsylvania Press’s Board of Trustees and I look forward to being a part of their continued success. I see many opportunities for UPP—from accelerating growth in the journals program to solidifying external partnerships to continuing to release book titles that are critical contributors to the wider academic discourse.”
An Excerpt From *The Difference Is Spreading* in Honor of National Poetry Month

April is National Poetry Month, and in commemoration, we’re sharing an excerpt from the Introduction to *The Difference Is Spreading: Fifty Contemporary Poets on Fifty Poems* (2022), written by the book’s editors, Al Filreis and Anna Strong Safford. Launched by the Academy of American Poets in April 1996, National Poetry Month reminds the public that poets have an integral role to play in our culture and that poetry matters.

Visit https://poets.org/national-poetry-month for more information.

This project has its beginnings in the syllabus of our massive open online course called “ModPo” (modpo.org), hosted by the Kelly Writers House in Philadelphia. Since we began offering this free, non-credit course in the fall of 2012, some 415,000 participants from 179 countries worldwide have enrolled in order to gain access to a survey of innovative poetry in the U.S., starting with two proto-modernists, Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman, and moving through to the 21st-century poetic practices of Caroline Bergvall, Tracie Morris, Jena Osman, Christian Bök, Erica Baum, Nasser Hussein and others. All fifty poets written about in this edition are part of the ModPo syllabus, as are many of the fifty contemporary poets who comment upon them here; and many of these have also been filmed in conversation with us as we have undertaken unrehearsed collaborative close readings captured in the videos that accompany the poems in the course. Thus one of the two main reasons for making this book: to bring together in one volume materials that will make for a written supplement—a companion of familiarsto the online ModPo experience.

Yet this book is not a ModPo textbook or primer. Rather—and this point brings us to our second raison d’être—our book stands as an effort to enact across pages something of what has made ModPo the dynamic experiment in collaborative learning that it is: the community of learners that has formed around a shared affection for reading and writing and incessantly talking about poems. This book is about, and is conceptually like—the way those communities commune: unexpected gatherings of poets, of readers, of learners—of any person who has ever said to another, “let’s talk about this poem,” and in doing so have formed pairings and groupings of the sort that are producing new readings for this volume.

The two of us join others in believing that the poems most challenging and most dynamic are the poems that are open—writings, that is to say, that ask the reader to participate in making the meaning they mean. There’s a pedagogy as well as a disposition toward criticism in this: we never want to presume to offer a single reading of a poem, nor to suggest that one exists. If that is what we had sought, we wouldn’t offer ModPo online to anyone anywhere, nor would we put at the center of the site expansively open and ongoing discussion forums. Poetry happens when a reader and a poet come in contact with one another, when the reader is invited to do interpretive work—realizing that the poem is inert without that metapoetic convergence. When Cid Corman’s speaker, in his poem “It isn’t for want,” asks to “detain” the reader inside the poem itself, it is to invite a whole association of the two. Corman is not interested in conveying content in the conventional sense (“it isn’t for want of something to say”); rather, the poem enacts the process of forging a relationship, an exchange, the very beginnings of something that might survive, through shared understanding of what words mean when arranged just so.

Our hope is that this book will function as an instance not only of what Corman wants and does, but of what an interpretive community wants and does in response to the challenge posed by the power—supportive and risky at once—of being detained by art in such a way. Each of the fifty poems represented here is one of those open, resistant-to-a-single-reading texts, and the poets who have engaged with them represent one possible approach to the poem among many that are possible. We trust that in engaging with these essays, our readers will feel emboldened and inspired to try their own hand at close reading. . . . The stances and approaches are various; and, once again, there are as many ways to read a poet writing about another’s poem as there are poet-poem matches in this edition. Yet a straight-through reading of these pages will indicate emphatically the general importance in poetry of community, socio-aesthetic networks and lines of connection, and genuine expressions of affection and honor due innovative colleagues and predecessors.
Author Publicity

Gene Zubovitch, author of Before the Religious Right (2022), was interviewed in Current and on the Library of Congress Insights blog and New Books Network. He was also featured on the University of Buffalo News Center website.

The Apache Diaspora (2021), by Paul Conrad, was named one of PIMA County Library’s “Southwest Books of the Year 2022.”

Author Events in May

All events are “virtual” unless indicated otherwise. Please visit Penn Press’s online calendar of events for registration links and the most complete and up-to-date information on all author events.

Patricia Stroud, author of The Man Who Had Been King (HC 2005, PB 2022)
May 1
The Old Bookshop of Bordentown (in-person)

Hillel J. Kieval, author of Blood Inscriptions (2022)
May 3
Jewish Museum in Prague

Catherine Ross, author of A Right To Lie? (2021)
May 4
Brennan Center for Justice

Susan Brandt, author of Women Healers (2022)
May 10, 7:00 pm
Tredyffrin Public Library (hybrid)
May 11, 6:00 pm
The Athenaeum of Philadelphia (in-person)
May 12
Stenton (in-person)

Urvashi Chakravarty, author of Fictions of Consent (2022)
May 20
University of Toronto (virtual)

Kateřina Čapková and Hillel J. Kieval, editors of Prague and Beyond (2021)
May 24, 6:30 pm
Society of the History of Czechoslovak Jews/Bohemian National Hall (in-person)

Penn Press at Harvard Bookstore

As part of the Harvard Bookstore’s annual Publisher Focus promotions, the following new and recently-published Penn Press titles appeared in one of Harvard Bookstore’s picture windows facing Massachusetts Avenue in Cambridge from March 28 until April 10.

Top row, left to right:
Medieval Badges by Ann Marie Rasmussen
Genesis and Validity by Martin Jay
On Pestilence by Girolamo Mercuriale; Translated and with an Introduction by Craig Martin
Bitstreams by Matthew G. Kirschenbaum
Japanese American Incarceration by Stephanie D. Hinnershitz
Far-Right Vanguard by John S. Huntington
Wit’s Treasury by Stephen Orgel

Middle row, left to right:
A Right To Lie? by Catherine J. Ross
Surveillance Capitalism in America, edited by Josh Lauer and Kenneth Lipartito
The Creole Archipelago by Tessa Murphy
Asylum Ways of Seeing by Heather Murray
Mastering Emotions by Erin Austin Dwyer

Bottom row, left to right:
Time for Reparations, edited by Jacqueline Bhabha, Margareta Matache, Caroline Elkins
The Roots of Educational Inequality by Erika M. Kitzmiller
The Future of the Office by Peter Cappelli
Critical Disaster Studies, edited by Jacob A.C. Remes and Andy Horowitz
Article by Article by Johannes Morsink