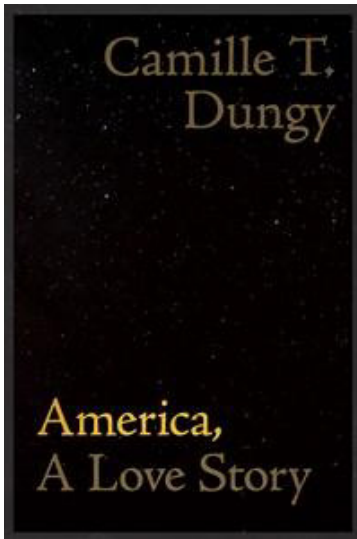


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One of the many compelling things about the work of Camille Dungy is the fact that it offers a lyric record, book by book and poem by poem, of the pain of learning that the world is a violent and unforgiving place. Not that sweetness doesn't thrive on this earth, too, but that it must contend with immense forces of nihilism, racism, and plain meanness...In her spare, instructive lyricism you hear Rita Dove, Louise Glück, Robert Hayden, Ellen Bryant Voigt, and sometimes the blues—even the bleeding, burning stream-of-consciousness of Toni Morrison's *Beloved*.
—Jesse Nathan, *McSweeney's*

I am struck not only by the truth and danger in these pages but also the strange and beautiful moments of pause when the speaker realizes she has made it this far. She is still living, still going forward, despite it all, she is making her way through the ruins of this world.
—Ada Limón, *The Slow Down*

America, A Love Story

Camille T. Dungy

Summary

New poems on love, family, and art from the author of *Soil: The Story of a Black Mother's Garden*

America, A Love Story is Camille T. Dungy's powerful testament to living and loving as a Black woman and mother in today's America, and her first book of poetry in almost a decade. Piercingly honest and deeply compassionate, this poetry moves through the mounting griefs of contemporary American life with unwavering clarity. The book is part indictment, part celebration—full of gratitude, fear, resistance, and hope. Dungy explores intimacy, parenting, racism, history, and the natural world with clarity and depth. Some poems reflect on the past; others respond to the work of contemporary Black artists. Many are formally playful, including a series of 700-character poems inspired by the 700 hours of sleep a mother loses in her child's first year. Gorgeous, bright, and bold, these poems speak from the edges—between mother and child, body and earth, self and country. They hold tension and tenderness in equal measure, creating a space for love amidst uncertainty.

[sample poem]

To enter our own empty house

She was seven when we stopped
using keys. One less thing to lose.
Now we punch a combination. Easy,
but hopefully not so easy a stranger
could guess. This is where I should
stop. They are bound to be angry, my
beloveds. I am giving away all our
secrets again. Vulnerability is the
root of much fury. =

I was small. A stone in the yard hid a
metal case with a lid that slid like a
matchbox top to reveal our key.
Lifting that rock I thought of bashing
someone's head. I thought of harm
lurking, dressed in the body of some
stranger.

=
Sometimes, I wrestle my daughter.
I make her tiny body work itself out
from under the weight I make of
my own. In this way I try
to teach her how it feels to break free. *America, A Love Story*

Author Bio

CAMILLE T. DUNGY is the author of *Soil: The Story of a Black Mother's Garden* (2023) and *Guidebook to Relative Strangers: Journeys into Race, Motherhood, and History* (2017), a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award, as well as four collections of poetry, including *Trophic Cascade* (2017), winner of the Colorado Book Award. She is a University Distinguished Professor at Colorado State University.



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Burning Oracle

Sandra Simonds

Summary

A fierce, visionary book-length poem

Burning Oracle is a visionary, book-length poem told from the fractures of a world on fire where myth, memory, and contemporary life collide. Cassandra—seer, mother, survivor—wanders through forests of digital noise and historical trauma, her voice both ancient and urgently new. At the heart of the poem is a pilgrimage to the grave of poet Paul Celan where she traces personal loss within the wider context of inherited trauma—particularly the Holocaust—and seeks meaning in the act of remembering. As floods rise and fires rage, the personal and historical ignite a mythic voice. Through the commonplace of stained dresses, shattered screens, and supermarket aisles, Cassandra encounters figures like Goya, Reynard the fox, and Celan himself, weaving their stories into an intertextual, image-rich landscape. *Burning Oracle* is a feminist reckoning, a personal mythography, and a testament to the power of poetry to animate the archive of history, memory, and everyday life.

[sample poem]

*

From II

No source, my Seine, a
German one instead,
Sixteen & reading Hölderlin's
Der Rhein at the foot of a massive
statue of Goethe and Schiller.
Stupid anorexic American girl.
But not really American.
And not really French.
And not really Turkish.
And not really Syrian.
And not really Spanish.
And the tourists at the camp.
Was I a tourist?
Squeal of the cassette
tape rewinding
Pink Floyd's The Wall.
Ah, when you speak German, no
one can tell you're American.
When you speak
English no one can tell you're
French. Too sick to go on.
Anne of Green Gables Figurines.
I'm always too sick
to go on, that's my
charm—a gray ruin
turned maroon
turned black.

*

It is easier to go mad,
Francisco says, than
one might think.

Easy to lose things.
People too.

Perhaps too easy.
Step inside and
you may not
come back.

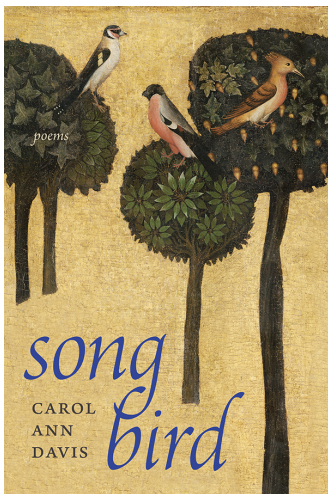
He listed the colors he liked:
Black.
Black.
Black.
Black.
He told himself to stay
inside the painting of the
chartreuse river, stay inside,
Reader, and he found his
arms roping and looping
into Cassandra holding a
tray of dead pigeons.

Contributor Bio

SANDRA SIMONDS is professor of English [SS2] and Humanities at Thomas University and the author of eight collections of poetry, most recently, *Triptychs* (Wave Books, November 2022). Her poetry, criticism, and creative nonfiction have been published in the *New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *Best American Poetry*, *Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, *Chicago Review*, *Granta*, *Boston Review*, *Ploughshares*, and elsewhere.

"*Burning Oracle* is expansive and explosive in its form and psychological terrain. Partly a literary biography, partly a love story, and partly a personal reckoning, Sandra Simonds has created a porous, fresh way of making a long poem. A fluid-like curved lyric form is spliced with several list poems, and both try to witness the invisible. Bursting with allusions, the voices in these poems are part of a lineage of prophets and visionaries. *Burning Oracle* bleeds out of itself into the whole world."—Sean Singer, author of *Today in the Taxi*

"In a Sandra Simonds poem, anything can happen. *Burning Oracle* mashes together Reynard the Fox, Celan, Cassandra, Goya, epigenetics, the speaker's ex-boyfriends, and ancestors murdered in the Holocaust. Madcap exuberance collides with rich intertextuality, as the poet augurs the end of civilization. 'I'm nothing but green lightning,' she warns, 'a psychic conduit.'"—Michael Dumanis, author of *Creature*



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Songbird

Poems

Carol Ann Davis

Summary

Resonant poems give form to the paradoxes of embodiment and interiority

Utilizing the short lyric poem in long sequence, *Songbird* addresses matters both urgent and ancient: what it is to grow from a child into an adult, how to remain inside one's body, what it means to open the mouth and sing. Guided by the images, senses, and sounds provided to her by the natural world, the poet invents a stuttering natal language to approach the unsayable aspects of interior life. In doing so, the poems collectively trouble the binaries that beset modern existence: the simultaneous push-pull of sexual desire; the interior and exterior landscapes that shape our perceptual fields; the reckoning of violence with beauty; the human need for both permanency and flight. *Songbird* is a daring and necessary book.

[sample poem]

let me take something small

between my teeth

piece of straw meant to signify your body

which was given freely to me or threads of me

that are wheat strands always these small barter

for a price would I give you the edge that is

your absence for my presence and you between my teeth

for the price of grass the price of all grasses

so say I to you in prayer I would

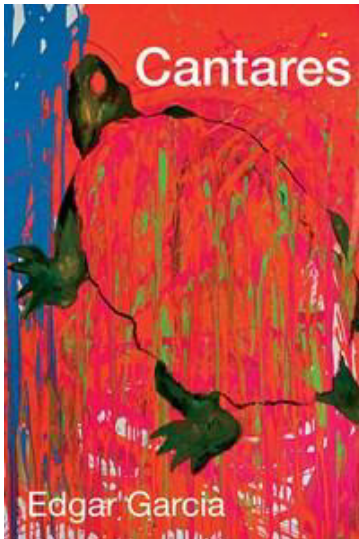
swallow whole what gave you in part

Contributor Bio

CAROL ANN DAVIS is a poet, essayist, and author of the poetry collections *Psalm* (2007) and *Atlas Hour* (2011), and a collection of essays, *The Nail in the Tree* (2020). A former longtime editor of the literary journal *Crazyhorse*, she is Professor of English at Fairfield University, where she is Director of the Low-Residency MFA and founding director of Poetry in Communities, an initiative that provides poetry curricula to communities hit by sudden or systemic violence. An NEA Fellow in Poetry, Carol Ann has read her work at the Library of Congress, Poets House, on the website of the PBS NewsHour, and at the Los Angeles Times Book Festival. Her work regularly appears in literary magazines and periodicals, including *The Atlantic*, *The Daily Beast*, *The Georgia Review*, *Image*, *The Gettysburg Review*, *The American Poetry Review*, and *Agni*.

"In these spaced out poems, one feels that Davis has broken English syntax in two then reassembled it in surprising ways. The result is a refocusing of the pace of reading and an intensification of emotion and tone. A new poetics is being announced in this compelling collection."—Billy Collins

"With *Songbird*, Carol Ann Davis revitalizes the American lyric, reclaiming for it a thinking music that is both disciplined and free. This is a book of reconnection in a time of severings."—Shane McCrae, author of *New and Collected Hell: A Poem*



Cantares

Edgar Garcia

Summary

Poems and micro-essays intertwine in this poetically attuned adaptation of the mid-sixteenth century Nahuatl-language *Cantares Mexicanos*

Cantares is a multipart engagement with the poetics and history of the colonial and Indigenous Americas, oscillating between poetry and essay in a structure of repetitions derived from Mesoamerican poetics. Edgar Garcia reimagines the *Cantares Mexicanos*, a sixteenth-century anthology of Nahuatl songs from Central Mexico, and brings these songs to life not just as historical documents, but as music, to give presence of thought to their historical layers and complexities. His adaptations evoke the sound and texture of the sixteenth century, blending Indigenous and Baroque traditions, exploring themes of translation, adaptation, race, and historical memory. The collection moves between poetry and scholarship—between poems and micro-essays. The essays provide commentary and historical context about the colonial soundscape of Central Mexico. At the same time, the poems emphasize the songs' sonic, spiritual, and poetic dimensions.

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The *Cantares* emerge from a time of cultural collision—after the arrival of the Castilians but still rooted in older, Indigenous worldviews. These songs are not nostalgic or idealized; they reflect crisis, survival, and creativity. Garcia's work draws inspiration from the *Popol Vuh*, the K'iche' Maya creation story, which begins in colonial darkness and still insists on the possibility of light. Through these adaptations, *Cantares* becomes a meditation on history, imagination, and the power of art to endure and create in the face of loss.

[sample poem, includes poem and mini essay]

CRISIS

Is there dragon fruit
or humming jade for
little birds in shady
colonnades?
Is there any multitude for the
displaced and dead retinues?
Subdued, like mountain ruins
in diamond lakes, they say:
"It sort of hurts to speak.
I think I have a sore throat.
You're probably sick.
Mask up if you go out."
I see them thus in masks: prattling
hummingbirds, barking geese, quetzals
in the guise of old lords, whippoorwills
in white sheets.
They cover the city in
search of things to eat.

Ancient landscapes hardly exist any longer. They've retreated to a future time. History comes at you that way in a world made by the hands and minds of countless bodies now dead. Ghostly heralds, and it's not only humans. Our sidewalks are made of mineralized animal bone; the air is the sighed carbon dioxide of trees long gone. When the *Cantares* were put to paper in the mid-sixteenth century in colonial New Spain their world—the world of the Mexicas, Texcocans, Tlaxcalans, Huexotzincos, Azcapotzalcans, Tarascans, and others, many dead who took with them the knowledge of their world—must have felt absent from their cities, whose streets were then an emotional compression of memory, forgetting, imagination, and wish. Some called to the old

gods, others to the new, or even both at once, while still others addressed the crisis directly with acts of magic. The songs themselves, the *Cantares*, were understood in this spectrum of liability. Those who helped to circulate them, singers and the patrons of singers, could be imprisoned or killed for promulgating the wrong gods and wrong magic. The songs were as potent with the touch of these gods and this magic as an idol, ceremonial bundle, or ritual act. They were like ghosts uprooted waiting to be planted again.

Contributor Bio

EDGAR GARCIA is associate professor of English at the University of Chicago, where he is affiliated with the Program in Creative Writing. He is the author of *Emergency: Reading the Popol Vuh in a Time of Crisis*, *Skins of Columbus: A Dream Ethnography*, and *Signs of the Americas: A Poetics of Pictography, Hieroglyphs, and Khipu*.

"Garcia's *Cantares* is a rendering of the *Cantares Mexicanos* which opens a portal between the past of the original and the present of the translator, allowing the ancient to sing in the now. In this elucidating and stunning collection, these Nahuatl songs which were, in the words of Garcia, "ghosts uprooted waiting to be planted again," are reincarnated in new weird, wild, and wonderful existences."—Chloe Garcia Roberts, author of *Fire Eater: A Translator's Theology*

"Edgar Garcia's *Cantares* is a revelation of precision and transhistorical periplum. In Garcia's translative reinterpretations of the *Cantares Mexicanos*, sonorous parallelisms flower between Mesoamerican epistrophe and oneiric gnosis, between prose meditation and prosodic flight. Garcia has given us a rangy, spellbinding *Cantares* for today's age."—Jose-Luis Moctezuma, author of *Black Box Syndrome*

"Edgar Garcia's fourth book confirms his exceptional trajectory as a paradigm-shifting thinker and poet. *Cantares* is at once visionary, lyric, vexing, delightful, dream-wide, archival, cosmic and convivial, inviting its readers into a counter-catastrophe of sightline, flightline, counter-thought and counter-song."—Joyelle McSweeney, author of *The Necropastoral*



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The Hell of That Star

Hyesoon Kim, Cindy Juyoung Ok

Summary

Singular poetry made through censorship, elusion, and language renewal

The astonishing poetry collection *The Hell of That Star* enlivens the horror of Korean life under U.S.-backed authoritarianism. Poems of blows and vomit, births and coffins alternate blithe confidence and trembling terror. When slapped seven times by a government censor, Kim responded with defiant poems. The death of language becomes a death of the writer; within death, Kim finds new life in fragmentation and reorientation. This singular volume provides a wild and rigorous study of the words of the nation-state and the self, as well as the deprivations, detainments, and surprises in between. In evading censorship, Kim's poems question, twist, and transmute; language is a site where the personal and political meet to escape containment, emptiness, and domestication. The book includes essays by the author and translator.

[sample poem]

The tough after all
we still remain
and just in gathering it is lovingly even
while building each other's tombs while
patting each other's backs

But when each bird turns around
their arms flung! open
embracing tightly what
they do not even recognize as their grave
and they hug and hold harder and harder
stretching four limbs out over the laid sleeping mat and blanket
saying I love you I love you even in their sleep
In this world from which crying birds have disappeared
only I am left

Contributor Bio

KIM HYESOON has published fourteen Korean poetry collections and been translated into several languages. A winner of the Midang, Griffin, and Cikada poetry prizes, she lives in Seoul where she was a creative writing professor at the Seoul Institute of the Arts. CINDY JUYOUNG OK is the author of *Ward Toward* from the Yale Series of Younger Poets (2024).

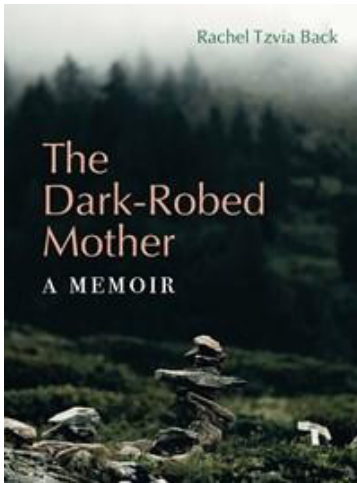
"Every poetry that lives up to its true tongue is an ancient soul writing its author. Decades ago, Kim Hyesoon's ancient soul met Cindy Juyoung Ok's soul. *The Hell of That Star* is the reunion of two poet-ghosts."—Fady Joudah, author of [...]

"Out of charred books, the censor's black coal tar, "the whip of the word," in *The Hell of That Star* Kim Hyesoon unforgettably enacts experience of and resistance to the neocolonial U.S.-sponsored dictatorship in postwar South Korea, with its relentless censorship, police brutality, economic exploitation, and martial law. Kim imagines a 'language without language,' the placeless place of the 'midstness' of life and death, visceral, intestinal, with curse-words spat like seeds, pus seeping from eyes, a 'corpse heavier than the whole world', 'I—I—I—I—I.' Her fierce interrogations of empire and patriarchy, the grotesque violence and violations of a woman's life under an authoritarian regime, are embodied by an utterly original, utterly unique voice—raw, sardonic, scatological, agonized, enacting the emotional extremity one only finds in ancient tragedy. As Michael Scammell, commenting on Mikhail Sholokhov's *The Quiet Don*, observed: 'The greater the original, the more translations it can bear.' Kim

Hyesoon is blessed to have as her collaborators in English brilliant poet-translators; Ok's translation is a work of true *translatus*, carrying-across Kim's ferocity and extremity into an English of commensurate intensity, inventiveness, and strangeness, restless in its questioning, transforming anguish and anger into expanding possibility." —Suji Kwok Kim

"The English-language renditions snap and haze language through shatters of earth and body, in keeping with Kim's challenge; they resynthesize fallout from her words into alt-selves speaking some parts human, some parts bird."

—Kristin Dykstra, translator of *The Winter Garden Photograph*



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The Dark-Robed Mother

A Memoir

Rachel Tzvia Back

Summary

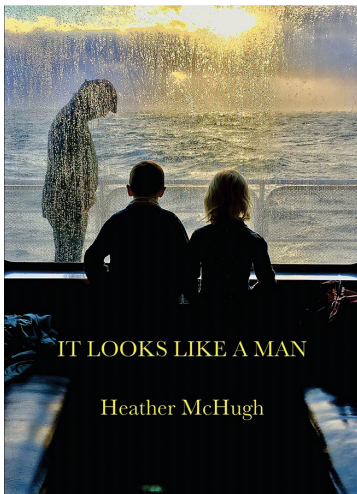
A lyric memoir about motherhood, depression, and writing

The Dark-Robed Mother is a striking blend of memoir and poetry, grappling with a cyclical "high-functioning" depression and its profound impact on self and family. It is also a modern descent into the underworld, reckoning with the myth of Demeter and Persephone as it unfolds through lived experience. Poet Rachel Tzvia Back draws on this ancient story of loss, return, and the aching bond between generations to illuminate her journey through decades of living, writing, and mothering with depression. She also explores family history and interviews each of her own children as she seeks to understand depression's mark from generation to generation. Threading myth through memoir, poetry through prose, Back confronts the question: how do we survive seasons of despair? And can we break the cycles that bind us to sorrow? Singular memories stand out as navigational "cairns," and the book calls on the poetry of other writers, summoning language to help retrieve oneself from the depths. *The Dark-Robed Mother* is a rare work of intellect and tenderness—a searching, intimate account of the importance of stories, language, and imagination.

Contributor Bio

RACHEL TZVIA BACK is a poet, translator and professor of literature. The author of 12 books, her poems and verse translations have received awards and recognitions, including the Times Literary Supplement Award, PEN Translation Prize, and Finalist for the National Poetry Award in Translation.

"More than a memoir of postpartum depression, *The Dark-Robed Mother* is a powerful exploration of motherhood, religion, grief, illness, and family. With poetic beauty and emotional intelligence, Rachel Tzvia Back offers a deeply honest and complex portrait of depression."—Rachel Louise Moran, author of *Blue: A History of Postpartum Depression in America*



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Poetry / Women Authors

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It Looks Like a Man

Heather McHugh

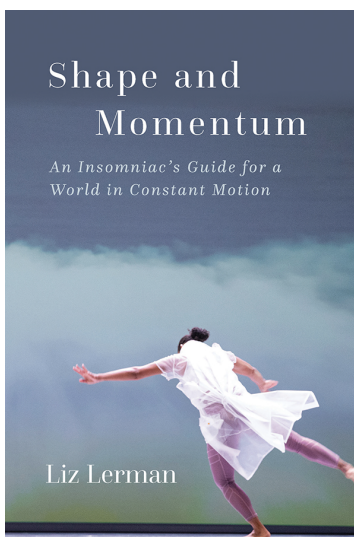
Summary

MacArthur Fellow and Griffin Poetry Prize winner reflects on the gap between experience and expression

Heather McHugh's new collection of poems joins her fourteen previously published volumes of poetry, essays, and translation (one a Pulitzer Prize finalist and another designated a Book of the Year by *Publishers Weekly*). With her 2010 MacArthur Fellowship she funded a program of restorative getaways for unpaid family caregivers. An abiding theme throughout McHugh's work has been the essential muteness of individual experience as it is remarked from greatening distances of time, space, or feeling. In view of that gulf between experience and expression, the words of characters here suggest the many ways a human being can be said to look.

Contributor Bio

Heather McHugh is an American poet notable for *Dangers*, *To the Quick*, *Eyeshot* and *Muddy Matterhorn*. McHugh was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship in the US and a Griffin Poetry Prize in Canada, and was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.



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Shape and Momentum

An Insomniac's Guide for a World in Constant Motion

Liz Lerman

Summary

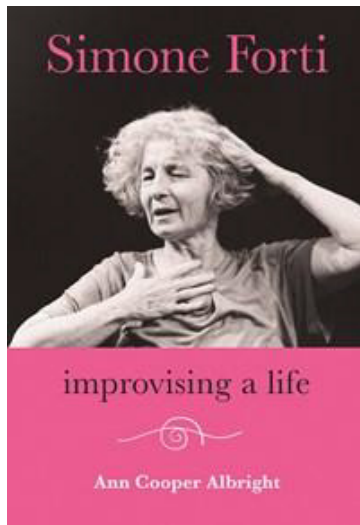
A choreographic manifesto for life in motion, offering new ways to navigate change and thrive amidst instability

A sequel to *Hiking the Horizontal*, Liz Lerman's *Shape and Momentum: An Insomniac's Guide for a World in Constant Motion* is a choreographic manifesto for living in motion—part memoir, part creative toolkit, part philosophical inquiry. Written in a series of essays, from single-paragraph meditations to expansive chapters, the book weaves together personal anecdotes, creative theory, and movement-based wisdom. Lerman draws on Heisenberg's uncertainty principle to frame a central question: how do we hold both shape and momentum—form and change—at once? With insight and generosity, she explores creativity as a life practice, rooted in embodied knowledge and accessible to all. Witches from her decade-long project *Wicked Bodies* appear throughout as fierce, funny guides, helping readers stay curious and grounded. Essays are grouped in thematic sections—lived experience, kinship, rejection, reflection, and radical imagination—culminating in an "Atlas of Creative Tools®," a practical and poetic resource. Bridging dance, education, politics, and spiritual practice, *Shape and Momentum* offers tools for navigating instability and making a more relational world.

Contributor Bio

LIZ LERMAN is an Institute Professor at the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts at Arizona State University. Her books include *Teaching Dance to Senior Adults*, *Hiking the Horizontal*, and *Critique is Creative* co-authored with John Borstel.

"Internationally acclaimed choreographer Liz Lerman lives her belief that just because creativity is natural doesn't mean we can't cultivate it, and this book shares the work, experiments, and tools built over a lifetime of artistic action. Just as some dancers hold shapes through their bodies and others burst with momentum, the poetic narratives and analytic insights artfully crafted here offer structure and movement for minds and hearts."—Martha Minow, 300th Anniversary University Professor, Harvard University



Simone Forti

Improvising a Life

Ann Cooper Albright

Summary

First critical biography of this visionary artist written by a dance scholar

Simone Forti, groundbreaking improvisor, has spent a lifetime weaving together the movement of her mind with the movement of her body to create a unique oeuvre situated at the intersection of dancing and art practices. Her seminal Dance Constructions from the 1960s crafted a new approach to dance composition and helped inspire the investigations of Judson Dance Theater. In the 1970s, Forti's explorations of animal movements expanded that legacy to launch improvisation as a valuable artform in its own right. From her early forays into vocal accompaniment to her News Animations, Forti has long integrated gesture and text into compelling performances that consistently stretched the boundaries of dance to layer abstract movement with story-telling and political commentary. Her "Land Portraits" series brought an immersive ecological experience to New York City stages in the 1980s, and she is a beloved teacher and mentor whose Body, Mind, World workshops have inspired dancers around the world. In this beautifully written book, author Ann Cooper Albright braids archival research, extensive interviews, and detailed movement analyses of Forti's performances to provide the first kinesthetically-informed and critically-nuanced history of Forti's multifaceted and extensive career.

Publication of this book is funded by the Beatrice Fox Auerbach Foundation Fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

Contributor Bio

ANN COOPER ALBRIGHT is professor of dance at Oberlin College. She is the author of six books including *How to Land: Finding Ground in an Unstable World* and co-editor of two seminal anthologies: *Moving History/Dancing Cultures* and *Taken by Surprise: Improvisation in Dance and Mind*.

"Simone Forti is a major figure who cuts across both dance and visual art, crossing genres in ways that have opened up possibilities and inspired many. Ann Cooper Albright brings her own poetic insights to her subject in this beautifully written book, giving a deep sense of the moving, shape-shifting artist. Albright creates a reading experience, a contemplation, that is remarkable in connecting mind, body, and spirit. Many revelations, small and large, await the reader."—Wendy Perron, author of *The Grand Union: Accidental Anarchists of Downtown Dance, 1970–1976*

"As Ann Cooper Albright's book makes clear, Simone Forti's unique improvisations, poetic verbal constructions, and quixotic directions have exerted a powerful influence. Themes of danger and coercion have combined in mysterious ways in much of Simone's work. She has demonstrated an uncanny sense of the verbal and visual images that her body is able to invoke in movement and stillness—visceral metaphors, you might say. Ever the creative maverick, Simone has continued to challenge us with her restless intelligence and derring-do."—Yvonne Rainer

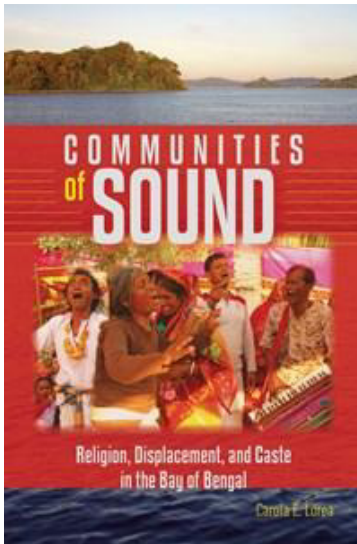
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Communities of Sound

Religion, Displacement, and Caste in the Bay of Bengal

Carola E. Lorea

Summary

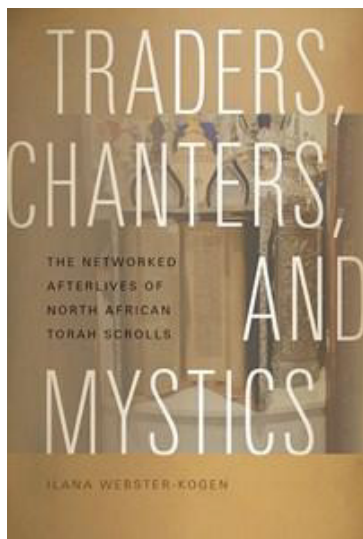
Sounding untouchability across postcolonial borders

Communities of Sound brings together insights from religion, anthropology, sound, and migration studies to explore the sonic traces of untouchability and forced migration across the Bay of Bengal. Based on an immersive, multi-sited ethnography with Matua devotees—a low-caste, Bengali-speaking Dalit religious community fragmented by Partition, war, and postcolonial displacement—the book explores how sound sustains identity across fractured geographies. Using richly detailed descriptions, the book follows traveling archives of song, story, and ritual performance through West Bengal, Bangladesh, and the Andaman Islands. These sonic practices—congregational singing, drumming, and itinerant storytelling—forge belonging beyond nation-states, connecting the Matua's fifty million members across borders and seas. In a world dominated by visual culture, *Communities of Sound* centers listening as a mode of knowledge and care, revealing how sound shapes our sense of self and cosmos. More than scriptures or doctrine, it is sound—entangled with authority and power—that binds this transregional Dalit movement and animates its collective action. The book is generously illustrated and references an online companion with video and audio examples.

Contributor Bio

CAROLA E. LOREA is junior professor for the study of religions at the University of Tübingen, Germany, where she leads the ERC-funded project MANTRAMS: Mantras in Religion, Media, and Society in Global Southern Asia. She is the author of *Folklore, Religion and the Songs of a Bengali Madman* (2016), and editor with Rosalind Hackett of *Religious Sounds Beyond the Global North: Senses, Media and Power* (2024).

"With its sustained focus on sonic and sensory aspects of the Matua diaspora's religious system, the author provides an admirably provocative contribution to acoustemology within an understudied but significant Hindu devotional tradition."—Frank J. Korom, School for Advanced Research



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Traders, Chanters, and Mystics

The Networked Afterlives of North African Torah Scrolls

Ilana Webster-Kogen

Summary

Interdisciplinary ethnography of Torah scrolls as ritual objects and subjects

For Jews all over the world, the Torah scroll is the height of holiness, framed as the carefully designed and produced word of God. Jews give great attention to the care of Torah scrolls, ensuring they are maintained and protected so that they can be used for ritually chanting the Torah portion regularly. *Traders, Chanters, and Mystics: The Networked Afterlives of North African Torah Scrolls* is an interdisciplinary ethnography of these ritual objects (or subjects) and their role in embedding neighborly relations into Jewish life over centuries. Drawing on Actor-Network Theory, the book foregrounds Torah scrolls not simply as vessels of text but as agents with social lives and affect—as subjects that act within networks of devotion, memory, and migration. In analyzing the scroll's diverse afterlives—how they are celebrated and venerated, how they are chanted from in new surroundings (primarily in France), and how they are collected by Jews and non-Jews—Webster-Kogen offers a new reading of Jewish embeddedness in North African culture and history. Scrolls's afterlives constitute patrimony and restitution, and they can be approached as musical instrument or mystical medium. Anchored in France's Sephardic-majority Jewish communities, this study emphasizes liturgical continuity, offering new insights into ritual, migration, and the entangled afterlives of sacred objects in postcolonial contexts.

Contributor Bio

ILANA WEBSTER-KOGEN is the Joe Loss Reader in Jewish Music at SOAS, University of London, where she is Head of the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics. Her first book, *Citizen Azmari: Making Ethiopian Music in Tel Aviv*, won the Society for Ethnomusicology's Jewish Music section publication prize. Her work has been published in academic journals such as *Ethnomusicology Forum*, *Contemporary Jewry*, and the *Journal of African Cultural Studies*.

"Drawing upon ethnomusicology and social theory, *Traders, Chanters and Mystics* shows the significance of reading from Torah scrolls to Maghribi Jews in France. A vibrant portrait of this lived ritual complex emerges from within circles of interaction surrounding it."—Harvey E. Goldberg, author of *Jewish Passages: Cycles of Jewish Life*



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9 in H | 6 in W

Remixing Race after Apartheid

Kaapse Klopse in South Africa

Francesca Inglese

Summary

The first in-depth study of Kaapse klopse, a carnival tradition in South Africa

Remixing Race after Apartheid is the first ethnographic monograph centered on Kaapse klopse, a South African carnival tradition, and it uses this genre as a critical lens to explore how sound mediates racial identity in the postapartheid era. Drawing on immersive fieldwork, interviews, and performance analysis, the book employs methods from sensory ethnography, sound studies, and critical race theory to foreground participants' lived experiences and aesthetic practices.

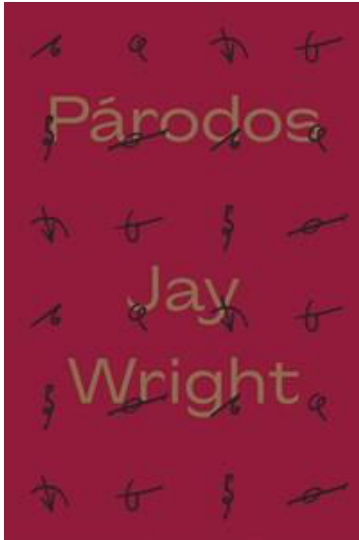
The study reveals how klopse has expanded since apartheid's end, particularly among youth and women, serving as a site of cultural resistance and self-making. Participants use klopse to respond to the racial and spatial legacies of apartheid and to marginalization within the everyday social, political, and economic conditions in which they live.

Challenging the reductive portrayals of klopse as either escapist or criminal, the book critiques the use of imported aesthetic categories and instead centers local meaning-making. *Remixing Race* shows how klopse operates as a dynamic, multisensory space where performers negotiate identity, history, and belonging—without collapsing their creativity into identity politics or erasing their social positioning. It offers a model for how ethnographic and sonic methodologies can illuminate the affective and political dimensions of racialized cultural expression.

Contributor Bio

FRANCESCA INGLESE is an assistant professor of music at Northeastern University. Her articles have appeared in *Ethnomusicology*, the *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, the *Journal of the Society for American Music*, *Women & Music*, and *African Music*, amongst other publications.

"*Remixing Race after Apartheid* is a beautifully written ethnography balancing multiple perspectives on carnival and community-building among the 'coloured' population in South Africa's Kaapse klopse. Inglese's skillful synthesis explores the understanding (and misunderstanding) of race and identity in local and global contexts."—Noel Lobley, author of *Sound Fragments: From Field Recording to African Electronic Stories*



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7.5 in H | 5 in W | 0.2 lb Wt

Párodos

Jay Wright

Summary

An inventive new collection from a master of form and thought

In *Párodos*, Jay Wright returns with a collection of poems that challenge through their density and reward with their inherent music. With a polyglot vocabulary and a restless spirit, Wright navigates the landscapes of memory, history, and philosophy. "The soul now must have a feel for the string," as Wright says, a Pythagorean sentiment that echoes throughout this intricate collection and the entire body of his work. These poems offer a singular testament from one of our most important poets.

Contributor Bio

Born in 1934, Jay Wright is the author of seventeen previous books of poetry as well as plays and essays. A fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, his honors include a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Hodder Fellowship, a Lannan Literary Award for Poetry, a MacArthur Fellowship, and the Bollingen Prize for Poetry.



Pettygod

Andrew E. Colarusso

Summary

The poems in Andrew E. Colarusso's *Pettygod* are irrepressible, holy, profane, tender, hilarious, "too hot to touch."

"Andrew E. Colarusso's newest is a sharp-edged erotic, politically unflinching poetry collection where syntax is shattered to reveal deeper ancestral reckoning. Like Kamau Brathwaite, Colarusso understands the page as a score to conjure rebellion, bend grammar, break form, and tune the line to the frequency of diaspora, confessional grief, and spiritual survival. His language pulses with both prophecy and protest, as seen in poems like 'The Pussy Detective,' which blends pulp poetics, satire and sovereignty, and refuses the sanitized gaze of empire while regarding the vernacular as sacred terrain. In 'Who Hath Known the Mind of God,' the writer reckons despair and the brutal intimacy of city life as it unfolds into a fever dream of love and despair. Across his work, interiority becomes a site of disruption, therefore, *Pettygod* be a living archive for the haunted and the holy. Colarusso scribes like fire, raising sacred spaces from ash, where fracture and ruin form the raw scaffolding of a resilient desire to be free."—Mahogany L. Browne

Contributor Bio

Andrew E. Colarusso is author of *Hivado* (Flood Editions, 2022), among other works. He was born and raised in the Ditmas Park neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York, where he runs Taylor & Company Books.

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192 Pages
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7.8 in H | 5.1 in W

Palestine is everywhere

Skye Arundhati Thomas

Summary

'Palestine is everywhere because it names a political subject of radical universal emancipation,' writes teacher and writer Nasser Abourahme. In *Palestine is everywhere*, writers, thinkers, poets and artists map the Palestinian struggle for freedom and its global resonances.

Vital dispatches from Gaza, essays, poems, protest chronicles, images and letters from prison reflect upon resistance, solidarity and the right to self-determination. Amid a world-historical moment marked by unknowability and loss, this collection offers essential reading for those interested in Palestinian liberation.

This collection is edited by Skye Arundhati Thomas, with contributions from Alaa Abd El-Fattah, Nasser Abourahme, Amal Al-Nakhala, Muhammad Al-Zaqzouq, Maisara Baroud, Ahmed Bassiouny, Houria Bouteldja, Anees Ghanima, Sahar Khalifeh, Laleh Khalili, Lujayn, Mira Mattar, Lina Meruane, Mohammed Mhawish, Nahil Mohana, Rahul Rao, Nasser Rabah, Adam Rouhana, Ahmad Zaghmouri.

Contributor Bio

Skye Arundhati Thomas is a writer and editor from India. Their new book *Pleasure Gardens* (co-written with Izabella Scott) on constitutional law, military occupation and the relations between India and Israel is out now with Mack Books, as is their book on the painter Lalitha Lajmi, with Sternberg Press. Their first book *Remember the Details*, on viral images, courtrooms, and a brief history of a protest movement, is published by Floating Opera Press. From 2021-24 they were co-editor of *The White Review*.



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On Feminist Films

The South London Cultural Review Volume 2

Stuart Bell, So Mayer, Louisa Wei, Emma Wilson, Catherine Grant

Summary

On Feminist Films is the second volume in the South London Cultural Review series.

This collection of essays celebrates the work of international feminist filmmakers from the 1950s to the present. Featuring contributions from leading scholars, filmmakers, essayists and activists, *On Feminist Films* is the second volume in the *South London Cultural Review* series. Contributors include: Stuart Bell, Catherine Grant, So Mayer, Louisa Wei, Emma Wilson.

Contributor Bio

Stuart Bell is a translator of French literature. He studied Modern Languages at the University of Cambridge where he was later Translator in Residence (2021). His previous publications include *Bird Me* (2021), which was shortlisted for the 2022 Oxford-Weidenfeld Prize, and *Yo-yo Heart* which was selected by the Poetry Book Society as their 2022 Winter Translation Choice. He also edited the 2021 collection *Moving Impressions: Essays on Art and Experience*, the inaugural issue of *The South London Cultural Review*.



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Hopelessness

Verity Spott

Summary

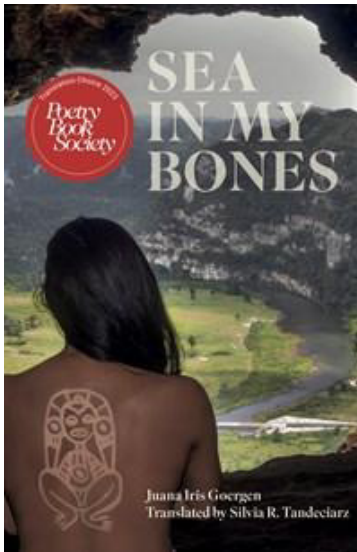
British Avant-Garde Trans poet Verity Spott's ode to T.S Eliot's *The Wasteland*, but for the 21st Century.

The Wasteland for the 21st Century? In this wild mini-epic poem, Verity Spott takes the reader through an inferno of references and situations, from begging fascists for love to an adapted script from Christopher Nolan's Batman films.

Contributor Bio

Verity Spott is a poet, teacher and care worker from Brighton, England, whose books include *Hopelessness* (the 87press), *Poems of Sappho* (in translation) and *Prayers Manifestos Bravery* (Pilot Press). Verity's poetry has appeared in The New York Times and has been translated into French, German and Greek.

"The brilliant Verity Spott has a new book out, called *Hopelessness* and published by the87press. The work defies categorisation: Verity is a poet, and this book is certainly poetry, but large parts are in prose form and towards the end it even takes on the structure of an absurdist play. There seems to be a loose narrative, and even recurring character voices, so I'm tempted to call it a short experimental novel, in the vein of Kenneth Patchen's *The Journal Of Albion Moonlight* (a personal favourite). Ultimately though I'd just call it a book; one full of words that are profound, moving, silly, sad, challenging and beautiful in equal measure. Even though it's still a boldly experimental piece, in some ways *Hopelessness* feels like the most accessible thing Verity's done. Without wanting to sound condescending, it's also the most mature. You don't get much more universal than death, love and loss, and these seem to be the main themes explored here. Another is language itself, the way it defines and limits our experience, and the way that we're constantly at the mercy of words and phrases as they're deployed by the authorities, the media, and eventually our own thought processes. Dissenting voices continually talk over one another throughout *Hopelessness*, often sampled from outside sources, or parodies thereof: Sappho, MR James, traditional hymns and folk songs, Hollywood movies, talk radio, tabloid newspapers, dreams and demagogues. Through it all there's a painful lesson about how loss can make us bitter and hard, and how by refusing to move forward we become empty caricatures mouthing meaningless clichés to wound and hurt. But grief and loss can also teach us about love, if we let them, and there is so much grief and love in this book. Verity continually rearranges reality (that is, language) as if searching desperately for a way out, but in the end, as always, there is just life, love, and death. *Hopelessness* is a bravura performance, wholeheartedly recommended."—Ben Graham



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Sea In My Bones / Mar En Los Huesos

Juana Goergen, Silvia Tandeciarz

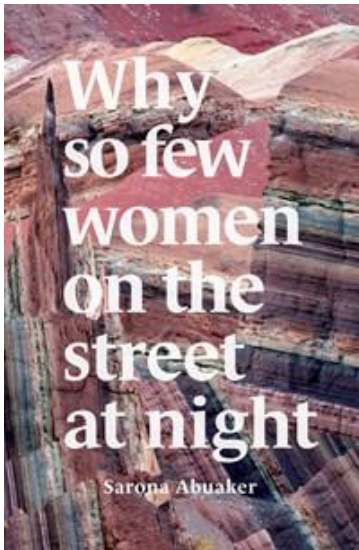
Summary

The fourth collection of poetry in Juana Goergen's rich trajectory, *Mar en los huesos* [*Sea in my Bones*] bears witness to a shared collective experience of trauma. It interweaves indigenous and African belief systems, languages, and memories to recollect the Caribbean's ancestral past and its imagination of the future. As is true of all memory work, *Sea in my Bones* simultaneously speaks to the broken present: its cry against injustice rests on the hope that through its labor, "the Zemies might awaken and the Caribbean peoples' origin be remembered." A multilingual tour de force that slips between Spanish, Taino, and Yoruba, Goergen's deployment of the poem as trace, as evidence, results in a cacophony of voices that bring together what life has torn apart. At the same time, the collection poses questions for all of us about the role of poetry in communities that have survived collective trauma.

Contributor Bio

Juana Iris Goergen (Puerto Rico). Poet and Emerita Professor at DePaul University, Chicago. Visiting Professor at InterAmerican University, Arecibo, Puerto Rico. She has published *La sal de las brujas* (finalist of Letras de Oro Awards, Betania 1997,) *La piel a medias* (2003,) *Las Ilusas/Dreamers* (in *Desarraigos, contratiempo*, 2008) and *Mar en los huesos* (Pandora/Lobo estepario, 2017.) Her poetry has been published in numerous anthologies, most recently, *LatinUsa* (Mexico, 2018). She was initiator and co-organizer for eleven years of the Chicago International Poetry Festival Poesía en abril. She has edited nine poetry anthologies, among them: *Susurros para disipar las sombras*, *Rapsodia de los sentidos* and *Ciudad Cien en* (Erato Poesía, Poesía en abril Chicago). She has been awarded contratiempo Poesía/Cultura Award, 2014 and the José Revueltas Poetry Award, 2018. At the moment she is working on two poetry collections *La celda del iris/ Iris prison cell* (under review) and *Requiem al sueño americano: otro "Canto general"/ Requiem to the American Dream: another "Canto general."* In 2019 she was honoured by the International Poetry Festival Poesía en Abril Committee and at DePaul University with a poetry award that bears her name, the Juana Iris Goergen Poetry Award.

"In this extraordinary bilingual edition of *Mar En Los Huesos*, Juana Goergen and translator Silvia Tandeciarz underline the richness of collective memory and lineage through an intertextual and linguistically captivating experience. These poetic sequences unfurl across lyrically fertile landscapes, where the sea comes to metaphorically represent both body and place, as well as the braided history and mythology of the Caribbean's ancestral past. Goergen's poetry 'distances and exhibits'; there is a careful witnessing and a fierce resistance in its compellingly told narratives of spirituality, colonial violence, and a deeply felt inheritance."—Alycia Pirmohamed



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Why so few women on the street at night

Sarona Abuaker

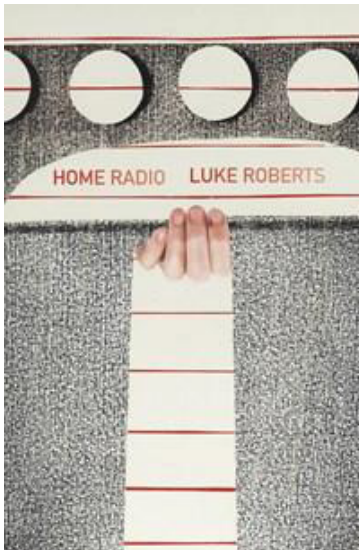
Summary

Palestinian artist and activist releases debut collection of experimental prose and poetry.

A searing and multi-form debut from Palestinian human rights activist and theorist Sarona Abuaker. Complete with images from performance pieces, essays, fragments of theory and notebooks, these are poems that engage the reader in thinking about liberation.

"Sarona Abuaker is one of the great rising experimental poets in our Palestinian global diasporic community."—George Abraham

"In Sarona Abuaker's extraordinary debut collection, "images, graphs, charts, statistics, maps, bank statements from the home of origin &/or showing the said home of origins" perform a version of skin that shakes until it is no longer something another person could touch. Is this erasure, a metamorphic performance, or the moment, in fact, in which the body is disappeared? In one searing instance, Abuaker attends to somatic memory as something made available only by severance, a physiological and political act: "release memory/ muscle/heart/if you cut open the chest/you will see the blockages/cross lines/coronary/green azygous/armistice/ partition/seizing seizing seizing." Here, syntax performs the cut and becomes the texture, the wound, the very thing that must be sutured now. As the poet writes: "resistance sometimes looks like constraint." Perhaps the same could be said of recovery (aftermath) as well. *Why so few women on the street at night* is another brilliant offering from the87press."—Bhanu Kapil



Home Radio

Luke Roberts

Summary

75 poems from 2011-2020 by poet, scholar, and editor Luke Roberts.

Home Radio brings together 75 poems written between 2011 and 2020. These are weathered forms of attention: pocket songs and daybooks, odes and longer workouts, bitter little lyrics and sweet generalisations. It's all staked on the seasonal, whatever the edge is, where poetry ends and history muscles in.

Contributor Bio

Luke Roberts is the author of *Rosa* (2019), *Sorbet* (2018), *To My Contemporaries* (2015) and other works of poetry. He is the editor of *Desire Lines: Unselected Poems, 1966-2000* by Barry MacSweeney (2018), and the author of *Barry MacSweeney and the Politics of Post-War British Poetry: Seditious Things* (2017). He lives in London. *Home Radio* is Luke's first full-length collection since *False Flags* (2011).

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