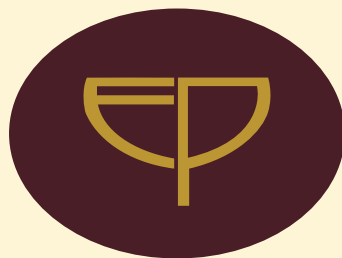


# 2019 RELEASES



etruscan press





etruscan press  
bearing imagination

[www.etruscanpress.org](http://www.etruscanpress.org)

**Etruscan Press is a nonprofit organization producing and promoting books that nurture a dialogue among genres and cultures. We encourage you to join and support our mission. For more information, visit our website or email us at [books@etruscanpress.org](mailto:books@etruscanpress.org).**

#### **A Note from the Executive Director...**

Do verse and prose spring from the same human impulse? Or are they completely different arts, joined by the technology of the alphabet? This question underlies our mission to cultivate a dialogue among genres, and it fans our word-palette into a shimmer of language. Lyric and narrative, imagination and memory, formal and post-modern, quotidian and hallucinatory—each Etruscan book partakes of each.

This year's six titles conjure diverse energies. Lynn Lurie's novel *Museum of Stones* and Sheryl St. Germain's memoir-in-essays *50 Miles* bring dream intensity to heartbreaking crises in motherhood; Mihaela Moscaliuc's *Clay and Star*, translations of the *Selected Poems* of distinguished Roma poet Liliana Maria Ursu, trace the history of a life and a people; Dante Di Stefano's poetry collection invokes *Ill Angels* to wind through a mid-life journey worthy of his namesake; and Stephen Benz's *Topographies* connects lands and peoples from Wyoming to Moldova. Then there is H. L. Hix, with his fourteenth Etruscan title. The critical essays of *Demonstrategy* map paths that his poetry has traced over many books.

Separately, these books make their own intrepid way. Together, they deepen and extend an on-going recitative between speech and song.

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poetry • fiction • creative nonfiction

## Museum of Stones



*Fiction*

LYNN LURIE

**Available April 2019**

*Museum of Stones* is a magnificent and bracing trek through motherhood. In a series of well-placed stones of urgent prose poetry, *Museum of Stones* reveals the fates in store for this newborn boy: wrists "no wider than a straw" and sternum sporting a tiny tower of gauze, hospital monitors aglow in their wide range of numbers and, later, "neatly folded sheets of paper crammed with lists of [the boy's] numerical codes." The book illumines the mutable states of the mother: the means by which she must carve herself, with "no distortions or duplications," from what precious daily clay is left.

- Diane Raptosh, National Book Award Semi-Finalist

Lynn Lurie is the author of two previous novels, *Corner of the Dead* (2008), winner of the Juniper Prize, and *Quick Kills* (2014). An attorney with an MA in international affairs and an MFA in writing, she lives in New York.

6 x 9 | 112 pp | \$16.00 | 978-0-9987508-7-3  
eBook \$16.95 | 978-0-9997534-6-0

## Ill Angels

*Poetry*

DANTE DI STEFANO

**Available June 2019**

*Ill Angels* explores the cul-de-sacs and jubilees of early midlife. In poems that are at once formally assured and daringly inventive, Dante Di Stefano invokes the lives of artists, musicians, and writers he admires as his poems ruminate on love, death, music, language, and notions of national belonging. The poems in this volume range from nightlight to midnight moon to hospital hallway and back again. Written with a commitment to the hard-fought duende and earned communion of poetry, *Ill Angels* aims at delight, wisdom, and the endless sacred consolations available to us through words on a page and in the air.

Dante Di Stefano is the author of *Love Is a Stone Endlessly in Flight* and the recipient of numerous awards, including the Paterson Poetry Prize and the Manchester Poetry Prize. His poetry, essays, and reviews have appeared in *The Los Angeles Review*, *The Sewanee Review*, and *Prairie Schooner*. He resides in Endwell, NY.

6 x 9 | 122 pp | \$16.00 | 978-0-9987508-8-0

# Topographies

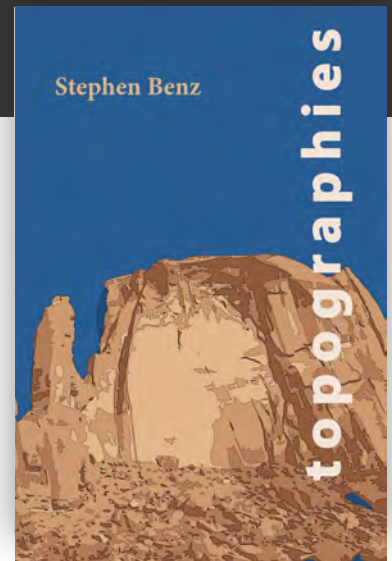
*Essays*

STEPHEN BENZ  
Available July 2019

A wild ride on the madcap streets of Guatemala City. A twilight walk through old Havana with a Cuban mailman. A canoe trip in search of a lost grave in the Everglades. *Topographies* is a collection of research-based personal essays that visit, describe, and reflect on landscapes of historical and cultural significance. Combining researched exposition, lyrical reflection, and storytelling, *Topographies* engages multiple genres, including narrative history, travel writing, literary journalism, and nature writing. The essays that comprise *Topographies* take an interest in the misunderstood stories--particularly forgotten, overlooked, or misunderstood stories--that landscapes have to tell.

Along with two books of travel essays, *Guatemalan Journey* and *Green Dreams: Travels in Central America*, Stephen Benz has published essays in *Creative Nonfiction*, *River Teeth*, *TriQuarterly*, and other journals. Two of his essays have been selected for *Best American Travel Writing*. Formerly a writer for *Tropic*, the Sunday magazine of the *Miami Herald*, he now teaches professional writing at the University of New Mexico.

6 x 9 | 340 pp | \$16.00 | 978-0-9987508-9-7  
eBook \$16.99 | 978-0-9997534-8-4



# Demonstrategy

Poetry, For and Against

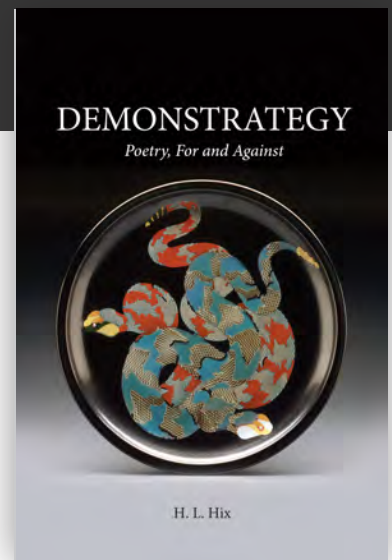
*Essays*

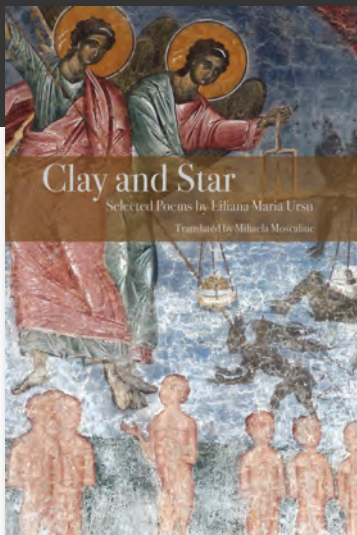
H. L. HIX  
Available September 2019

Against the busy background of the "information age" and the "anthropocene," where's poetry? It might seem invisible, irrelevant, but *Demonstrategy* shows that in an ever more technologized, globalized, militarized, racialized, monetized, privatized world, poetry is more important, not less. In paired essays about poetry in the world and the world in poetry, *Demonstrategy* finds poetry's pulse steady and strong.

H. L. Hix, author of two previous essay collections from Etruscan, *As Easy As Lying* and *Lines of Inquiry*, lives in the mountain west, in an 1880s railroad house.

6 x 9 | 192 pp | \$18.00 | 978-0-9997534-1-5  
eBook \$18.95 (978-0-7336741-0-2)





## Clay and Star

Selected Poems of Liliana Ursu

*Poetry*

MIHAELA MOSCALIUC  
**Available October 2019**

In *Clay and Star: Selected Poems of Liliana Ursu Translated by Mihaela Moskaliuc*, Romanian poet Liliana Maria Ursu captures with breathtaking precision the convergence of the sacred with the mundane. Whether anchored in Sibiu, Visby, Skala, or San Francisco, they both honor and transcend place and time as they search obsessively for essence, truths, self-knowledge, and the divine within.

Mihaela Moskaliuc is the author of *Immigrant Model* and *Father Dirt*, translator of Carmelia Leonte's *The Hiss of the Viper*, and editor of *Insane Devotion: On the Writing of Gerald Stern*. A former Fulbright Scholar, Moskaliuc is associate professor of English at Monmouth University and visiting faculty in the Drew University M.F.A. Program in Poetry and Poetry in Translation.

Born in Sibiu, Romania, Liliana Ursu has published thirteen books of poetry in Romanian, most recently the selected *Loc Ferit/Haven*. Her first book in English, *The Sky Behind the Forest*, was shortlisted for Oxford's Weidenfeld Prize. Ursu, who has been awarded Romania's rank of Knight of Arts and Literature, is also the recipient of two Fulbright grants and taught creative writing at the University of Louisville and at Bucknell University.

6 x 9 | 96 pp | \$17.00 | 978-0-9997534-3-9



## 50 Miles

*Essays*

SHERYL ST. GERMAIN  
**Available January 2020**

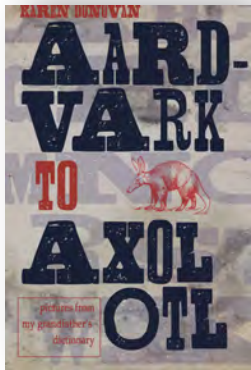
*50 Miles* is a memoir in linked essays that addresses addiction and alcoholism. The book traces the life and death of the author's son, Gray, a talented but troubled young man, to a drug overdose at thirty. Essays address Gray's childhood ADD diagnosis and potential connections between the drugs we use for ADD and later addiction, adolescence troubles, and the author's own struggles with recovery. Along the way we learn of the ways in which she used crocheting, travel, writing, and even gaming, as healing activities.

Sheryl St. Germain is a poet and essayist whose work has received numerous awards. Her most recent book is a poetry collection, *The Small Door of Your Death*. Sheryl directs the M.F.A. program in Creative Writing at Chatham University in Pittsburgh, and is co-founder of the Words Without Walls program.

6 x 9 | 199 pp | \$17.00 | 978-0-9997534-4-6

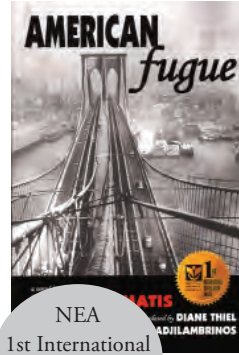
**eBook** \$17.95 | 978-0-9997534-9-1

COMPLETE BACKLIST



***Aard-vark to Axolotl***  
 Karen Donovan  
 Donovan creates a series of whimsical narratives based on illustrations from an old dictionary. The juxtaposition of image and text surprises and delights, making us wonder about the frangibility of all definitions.

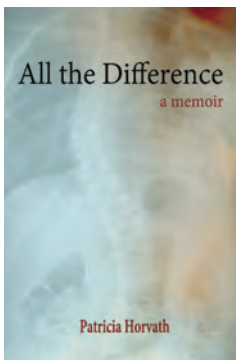
Essays, 107 pages, trade paper  
 \$15.00 (978-0-9977455-6-6)



***American Fugue***  
 Alexis Stamatis  
 This literary thriller follows the odyssey of a Greek writer traveling a strange and compelling landscape, where he re-discovers America—and himself.

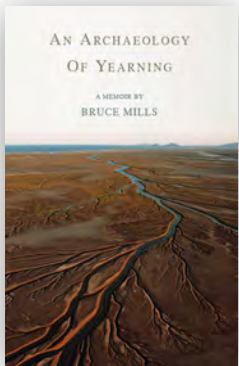
Fiction, 353 pages, trade paper  
 \$16.95 (978-0-9797450-2-7)

NEA  
 1st International  
 Translation  
 Award



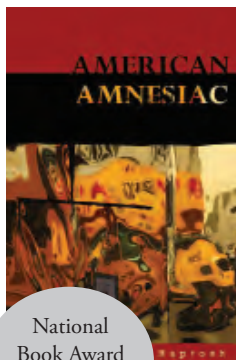
***All The Difference***  
 Patricia Horvath  
*All The Difference* is a captivating account of the author's transformation from a disabled young woman to someone who could pass for able-bodied, detailing experiences with bracing and spinal fusion and the literature of physical transformation.

Memoir, 188 pages, trade paper  
 \$16.95 (978-0-9903221-9-1)  
**eBook** \$15.99 (978-0-9977455-7-3)



***An Archaeology of Yearning***  
 Bruce Mills  
 Mill's remarkable memoir maps the artifacts of the life of a father and his autistic son as they learn the depth of relationships.

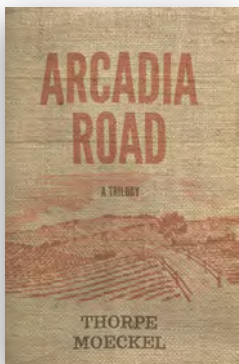
Memoir, 232 pages, trade paper  
 \$15.00 (978-0-9839346-9-1)  
**eBook** \$14.99 (978-0-9886922-2-0)



***American Amnesiac***  
 Diane Raptosh  
 The manic journey of a man stripped of memory confronts the complexities of being American in an age of corruption, corporations, and global conflict.

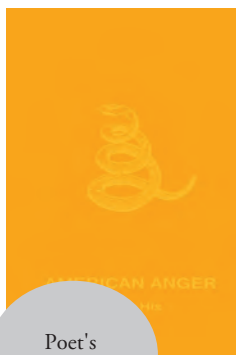
Poetry, 96 pages, trade paper  
 \$16.00 (978-0-9839346-6-0)

National  
 Book Award  
 Longlist



***Arcadia Road: A Trilogy***  
 Thorpe Moeckel  
 Consisting of three long poems—narrative, lyrical, meditative—Moeckel's poetry as each audacious as down-to-earth, and strange as intimate.

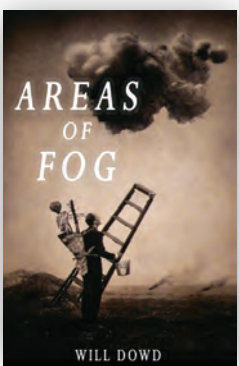
Poetry, 208 pages, trade paper  
 \$17.00 (978-0-09897532-5-8)



***American Anger: An Evidentiary***  
 H. L. Hix  
 More than an expressive book of poems, this work is an evidentiary reflection of civility and self-correction born from the poet's own philosophical research.

Poetry, 215 pages, trade paper  
 \$19.00 (978-0-9897532-4-1)

Poet's  
 Prize



***Areas of Fog***  
 Will Dowd  
 This collection of essays takes us on a journey through one year of New England weather. *Areas of Fog* combines wit and poetry with humor and erudition in a fun, breezy, and discursive read.

Essays, 160 pages, trade paper  
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**eBook** \$15.00 (978-0-9977455-9-7)

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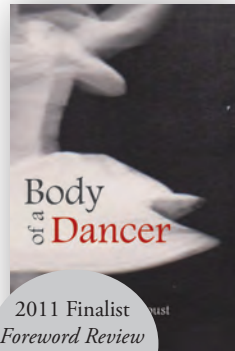


***The Arsonist's Song Has Nothing to Do With Fire***

Allison Titus

This highly compressed prose poem of a novel explores the loneliness of three misfits – a wallflower, an arsonist, and a doctor – as they attempt to reconnect to the modern world.

Fiction, 244 pages, trade paper  
US \$15.00, CAN \$16.50 (978-0-9886922-5-1)  
**eBook** \$9.99 (978-0-9886922-7-5)



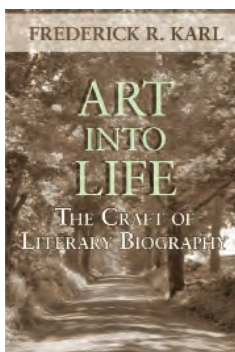
***Body of a Dancer***

Renée E. D'Aouost

*Body of a Dancer* provides a powerful, acidly comic record of what it is to love, and eventually leave, a life centered on dance.

Memoir, 154 pages, trade paper  
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2011 Finalist  
*Foreword Review*  
Book of the Year



***Art Into Life***

Frederick R. Karl

*Art Into Life* collects essays on biography by one of the twentieth century's most distinguished biographers, Frederick R. Karl.

Literary Criticism, 295 pages, hardcover  
\$29.95 (978-0-9745995-3-3)

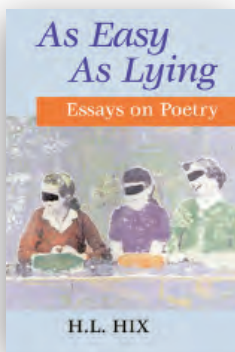


***The Burning House***

Paul Lisicky

*The Burning House* finds its narrator at his most vulnerable, and explores what it means to be a good man amidst chaos.

Fiction, 126 pages, trade paper  
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Accessible and ebullient, these essays delve into the workings of the poetic mind and offer keen assessments of contemporary American poets and poetics.

Literary Criticism, 148 pages, trade paper  
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Heyen wrote the record, unlike any other in our literature, of a poet staring into the central atrocities of our 20th century to find ways to realize, to understand, to remember.

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These dozen essays explore Oderman's journeys from arid lands to tropical and spooky destinations.

Essays, 238 pages, trade paper  
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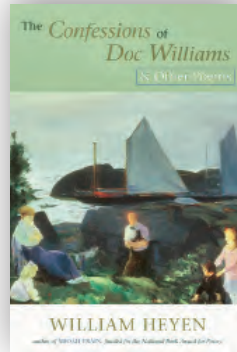


***The Casanova Chronicles***

**Myrna Stone**

In this book of voices, speakers resurrected from the deeper past and the dead chafe against the circumstances of love, sex, loss, and longing.

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\$17.95 (978-0-9819687-3-5)



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Poetry, 74 pages, trade paper  
\$15.95 (978-0-9745995-5-7)



***Choir of the Wells***

**Bruce Bond**

*Choir of the Wells* is a tetralogy that coheres as a singular exploration of the mind-body problem grounded in daily heartbreak, wonder, novelty, and compulsion.

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***Crave: Sojourn of a Hungry Soul***

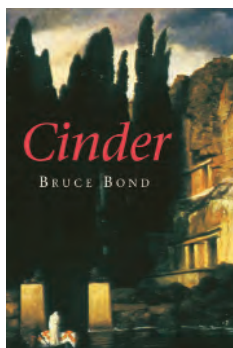
**Laurie Jean Cannady**

This coming-of-age memoir chronicles a young girl's journey through abuse and impoverishment.

Memoir, 384 pages, trade paper  
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National Book Award Finalist

Foreword Reviews Book of the Year Finalist



***Cinder***

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With the luminous precision of music, Bruce Bond has crafted a generous and urgent collection of poems, a work that celebrates the human condition and terrifies us with it in equal measure.

Poetry, 66 pages, trade paper  
\$14.95 (978-0-9718228-5-6)



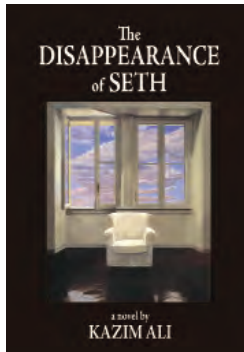
***Crow Man***

**Tom Bailey**

These eleven quintessentially American stories fully demonstrate our unstinting capacity for love and loss.

Fiction, 179 pages, hardcover  
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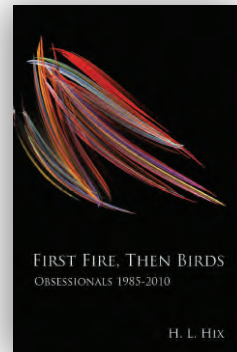


***The Disappearance of Seth***

Kazim Ali

A lyrical, hypnotic narrative that attempts to historicize the political events of recent years with the personal struggles of its protagonists.

Fiction, 197 pages, trade paper  
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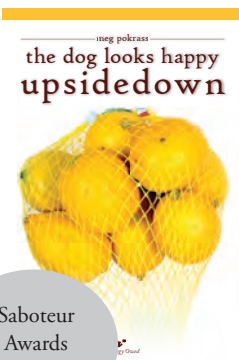


***First Fire, Then Birds: Obsessionals 1985-2010***

H. L. Hix

*First Fire, Then Birds* is H. L. Hix's version of a "selected poems," presented not simply as a chronological accumulation but as a synoptic and stereoscopic vision of a new whole.

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\$27.95 (978-0-9819687-4-2)



***The Dog Looks Happy Upside Down***

Meg Pokrass

This collection of flash fiction contains bite-sized glimpses into the lives of everyday people, leaving readers with long and lasting effects of further contemplation.

Flash fiction, 124 pages, trade paper  
\$15.00 (978-0-9903221-2-2)

Saboteur Awards Longlist

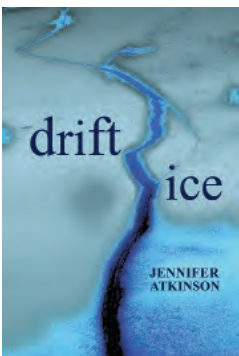


***The Football Corporations***

William Heyen

This uncompromising and authoritative collection powers its way into a post-catastrophe setting of dirty bombs in stadiums, tortured athletes, corporate domination, and cynicism on a global level.

Poetry, 80 pages, trade paper  
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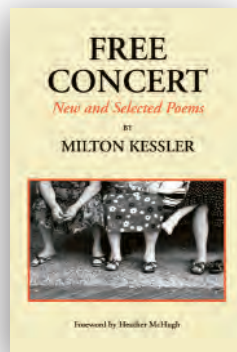


***Drift Ice***

Jennifer Atkinson

The poems in *Drift Ice* address the myth of a once pristine wilderness, the indifferent, ever-changing nature of Nature, and our human place in it.

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\$16.95 (978-0-9797450-0-3)



***Free Concert: New and Selected Poems***

Milton Kessler

Kessler left behind new work that celebrates the life and work of a gifted poet of original voice, presenting work from each of his books together with his new poems.

Poetry, 125 pages, hardcover  
\$29.95 (978-0-9718228-2-5)  
trade paper  
\$17.95 (978-0-9718228-4-9)



***Fast Animal***

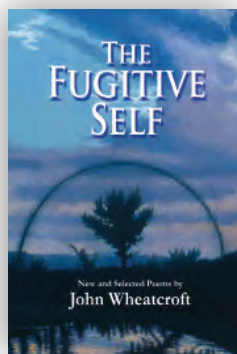
Tim Seibles

*Fast Animal* plots the movement from innocence to awareness, and what happens to each of us as we bounce off the various obstacles life places between us and our fulfillment.

Poetry, 88 pages, trade paper  
\$14.00 (978-0-9832944-2-9)

National Book Award Finalist

Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize



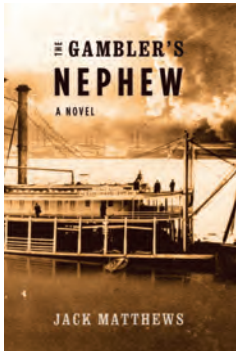
***The Fugitive Self: New and Selected Poems***

John Wheatcroft

A tribute to a distinguished career spanning fifty years in American letters. Meditative, whimsical, and hard-hitting, it illuminates the cost of American expansion.

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Fiction, 270 pages, trade paper  
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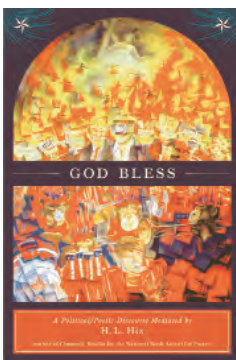


***Help Wanted: Female***

Sara Pritchard

This collection of short stories tells the tale of women needing and offering help in all forms, as their lives interconnect as all do.

Fiction, 188 pages, trade paper  
\$15.00 (978-0-9832944-8-1)  
**eBook** \$14.99 (978-0-9839346-7-7)  
Audiobook | ASIN: B00GWND2TU

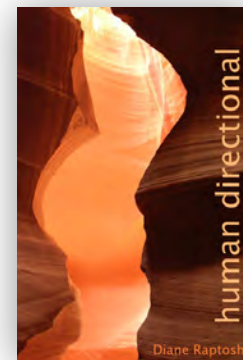


***God Bless:  
A Political/Poetic Discourse***

H. L. Hix

In poems at once playful and grave, H. L. Hix pits excerpts from the speeches of George W. Bush against arguments from Osama bin Laden in a poetic dialogue.

Poetry, 169 pages, trade paper  
\$19.95 (978-0-9745995-7-1)

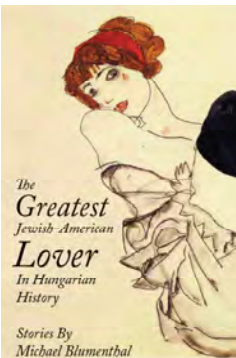


***Human Directional***

Diane Raptosh

*Human Directional* reveals the heartbreak and absurdity of our world by exploring—and often exploding—its most sacred memes.

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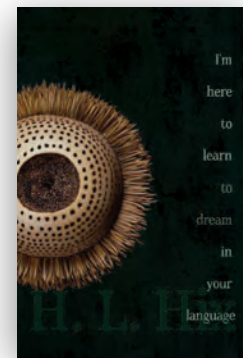


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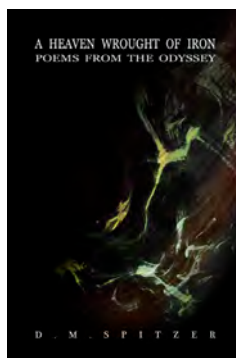


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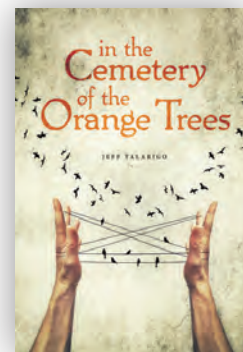


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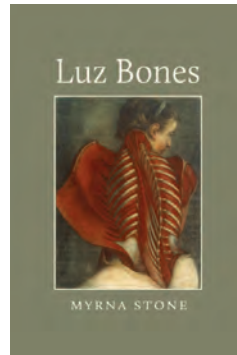


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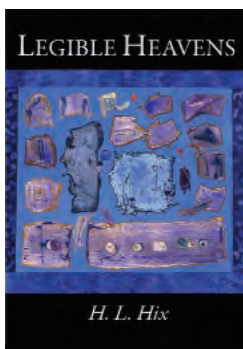


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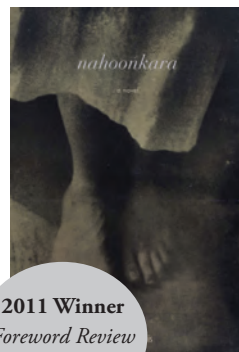


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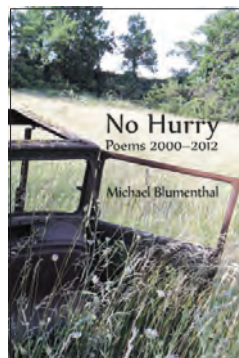


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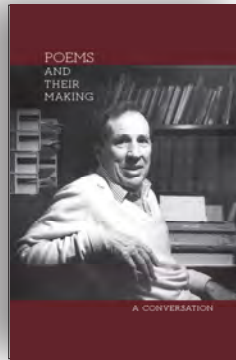
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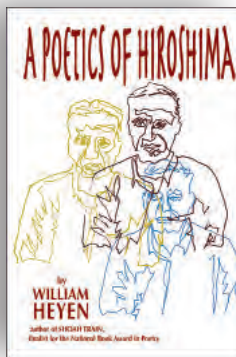


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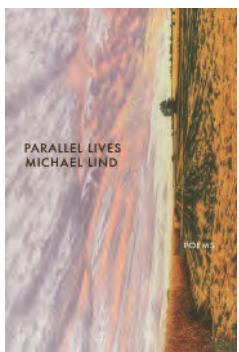
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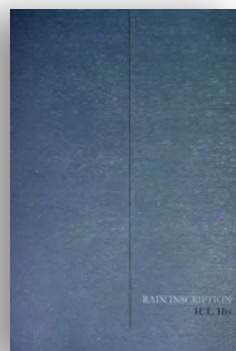
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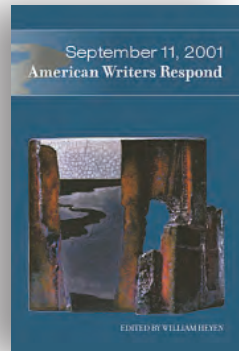
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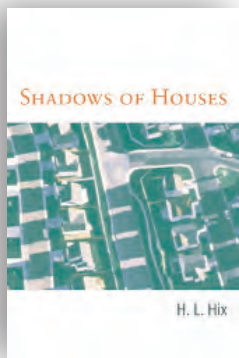
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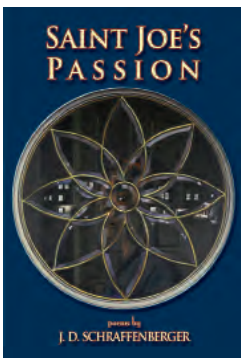


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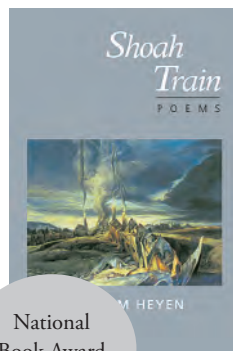


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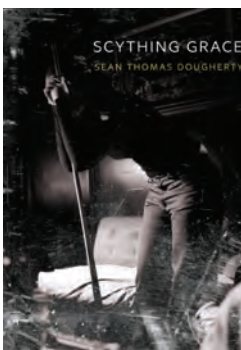
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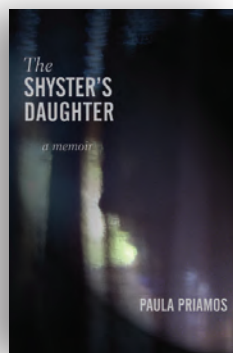


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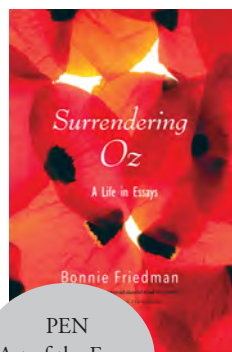


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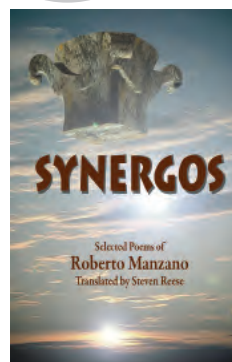


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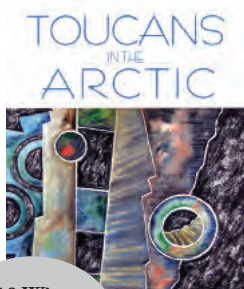


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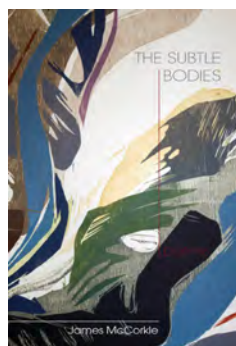
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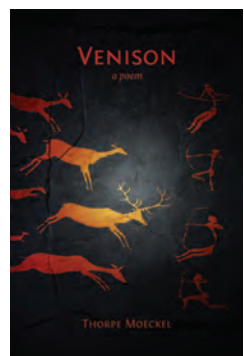


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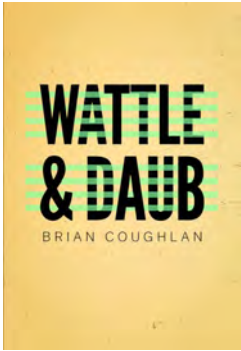
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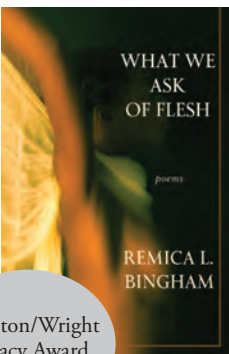


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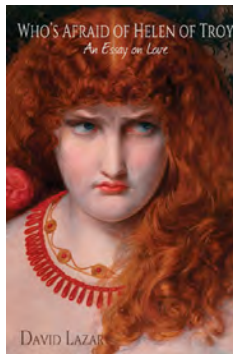
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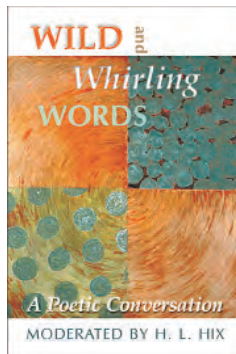


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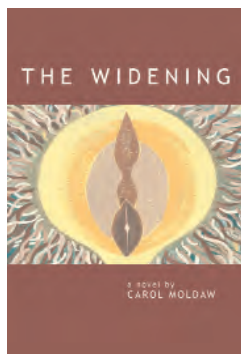


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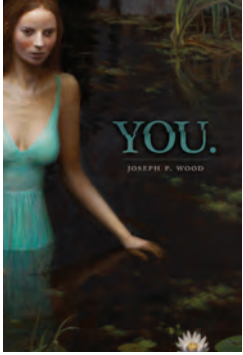


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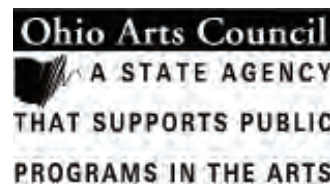
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# Interview with H. L. Hix

by Judith Jones



The author of more than fourteen books of poetry and essays, H. L. Hix is the recipient of the Fulbright Distinguished Lectureship, an NEA Fellowship, and the Grolier Prize. His 2006 collection of poems, *Chromatic*, was a National Book Award Finalist and he received the T. S. Eliot Prize for his 2001 collection, *Rational Numbers*. In *Demonstrategy*, his forthcoming collection of essays (Etruscan Press, 2019), Hix asserts poetry's strong and steady significance in our increasingly global society.

## **Describe your work routine. How are you able to produce so prolifically?**

I'd be deluding myself if I tried to take credit for something that's mostly a function of my enjoying fortunate circumstances: I have "a room of one's own;" my partner is supportive of me and my writing in a practical as well as a spiritual sense; my job permits me more periods for intense focus on writing than many jobs would; to this point in life (knock on wood) I've enjoyed good health; and so on.

Making the most of those blessings seems to me one way of expressing gratitude for them, so I've tried also to make *decisions* that complement those gifts. For example, I take as wisdom the advice a teacher once gave me: whatever you value most, do first. So I write way early in the morning, at a time of day when my writing will never get pushed aside by a committee meeting! I don't think it so much matters what approach one takes: it works for me to write way early, but I have prolific writers friends who write way late, or while walking the dog. The main thing is doing whatever it is that helps you apportion your time and energy in fulfillment of what you value, not what advertisers would steer you toward.

## **How has your previous artistic experience influenced your work?**

Other art forms, especially visual art and music, have influenced my work heavily, in at least two senses: they've influenced my working *practices*, and also the *content* of my work. By a stroke of luck, my first job after grad school was at the Kansas City Art Institute, a college focused on the visual arts, so I "grew up" as a poet in a community of extraordinary visual artists. Watching

them at work imprinted on me the intimate connection between seeing *anew* and seeing *clearly*, and was a constant reminder that it may be a telling and a showing, but first and foremost poetry (as the etymology of the word suggests) is a *making*, a *doing*.

Same with music as with visual art. When I was a little kid, my mother tried to get me to learn piano, but I thought it was a sissy thing to do. That's high on the list of childhood stupidities I've been trying to recover from ever since, so as an adult I've sometimes taken music lessons. I still can't play an instrument, but music instruction has influenced my sense about poetry. I've often recounted the story of having arrived early for my lesson once while I was trying to learn classical guitar, and waiting in the hallway for a few minutes, listening to my teacher practicing a single note. Here was this amazing concert guitarist, and what I heard outside the partially open door of his studio was plink, long pause, plink, long pause, plink, long pause, and so on, the whole time I stood there. Such moments helped music enforce on me recognition of the importance of refining my *hearing* (he was hearing subtle differences between each *plink* that I wasn't hearing), and the importance of attention to detail, and the quantity of time and labor and discipline that lies underneath each tip-of-the-iceberg finished piece.

In addition to such ways of influencing my practice, other art forms also influence the *content* of my work. For example, it's easier to see in a Bach fugue or an Agnes Martin painting this fact that is true also of poetry: structure and pattern can be profoundly evocative. A Bach fugue is just a short string of notes "tinkered with" by rearranging them, layering them, and so on. Yet that structure can alter a listener's mood or elevate a listener's state of mind. Poetry patterns phonemes instead of tones, but still can *evoke* through structure, so I try very hard to create evocative structures.

## **You define individual exceptionalism as inadequate to deal with the urgency of global demands in the 21st century. How is implicationalism preferable to exceptionalism?**

In some ways, it's a distinction we're all very familiar with. If you're the biggest kid on the playground in second grade, you get to be the bully: the one who makes up rules and enforces them on others without having to abide by them. Or if you're a wealthy, highly militarized nation, you get a veto power in the U.N. that other nations don't get. We all at some level recognize one-set-of-rules-for-everyone as more just than I'm-exempt-from-the-rules. We think of it as an improvement democracy makes over tyranny, that the laws bind the leader(s) just like they bind everyone else.

## **How specifically can poetry advance implicationalism?**

One thing that in *Demonstrategy* I'm claiming for poetry is that, as a form of heightened attention, it can help us recognize ways in which (unlike what happens in the schoolyard or even in international politics) we can't get out of playing by the rules. A tyrant might avoid, say, the tax laws that apply to others, but a nation is merely delusional that thinks itself exempt from the law that adding greenhouse gases to the atmosphere affects the earth's climate. I try to argue in *Demonstrategy* that poetry, as a means of "squaring up to," rather than deluding ourselves about, ultimate realities, can help us live within, rather than pretend to be above, our circumstances and limits.

## **What were your impressions of the students at Shanghai University and Yonsei University in Seoul?**

I'm inclined to regard us (we humans) as more importantly similar to than different from one another, and I'm inclined to think our similarities run deeper than our differences. I didn't experience anything in Shanghai or Seoul to contradict that. To me, the students seemed very smart and curious, and seemed to express that smartness and curiosity in ways appropriate to their context. At Yonsei, for example, a very selective university in an achievement-oriented society, the students were grade-conscious and anxious to do well: and they *did* well. Like any experience of being in a new context, my experiences in Shanghai and Seoul were humbling for me: just as one example, at Yonsei every person in the room was fluent in at least two languages - except me!

## **Where do you find inspiration to ask What is at stake? as opposed to Is it good?**

I take it as a particular form of the more general attempt to keep one's priorities straight. Asking whether a poem is good attends to the comparison between poems: this poem is good, in contrast to that poem, which isn't. It's a form of ranking, and it's fascinating in the way other rankings are: which college football teams are in the top 25 this week? What are the five hottest new looks for fall? By contrast, asking what is at stake in a poem doesn't compare the poem to other poems; it compares the poem to my life. Asking whether it's good is fascinating, but only asking what's at stake is edifying, and it's the edifying rather than the fascinating that I seek in poetry.

## **We live in a time of extreme and growing polarity - politically, economically, socially. Do you think that broader distribution of welfare and wealth will prevail?**

I can't predict the political future any more precisely than I can predict the weather, but in regard to both I can make some fairly secure educated guesses at a certain level of generality. I can tell you that in January five years from now in Laramie, Wyoming, it will be cold. Very cold. And I can tell you that increasing concentration of wealth can't continue forever. I recently read, not in a literary journal but in *Forbes*, that the three wealthiest individuals in the United States currently control more wealth than the bottom 64% of the U.S. population.\* Wealth is now more narrowly concentrated than it has been ever before in U.S. history. It doesn't take an economist to discern that sooner or later that will change. I hope I'm right that change is inevitable, since current distribution of wealth is a profound injustice, a form of structural violence on a mass scale. I hope I'm wrong in my intuition that the change will itself be violent.

## **How does "critical third person" unite author and reader?**

I think there's a strong affinity between the critical third point of view and the mantra that writing teachers so often offer beginning writing students: "show, don't tell." It is more effective to depict for the reader the basis for experiencing an emotion, thus enabling the reader to enter the emotion, than to name the emotion, thus positioning the reader only to look at the emotion from the outside. In a sense, critical third is that mantra, but focused on the moral and political aspect of a poem: it's more effective, I think, to depict for the reader a morally-charged situation, inviting the reader's own moral reflection, than to advocate to the reader a moral position.

\* In case it's relevant, here is the source for that statistic:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/noahkirsch/2017/11/09/the-3-richest-americans-hold-more-wealth-than-bottom-50-of-country-study-finds/#54922f3cf86e>

## **Have you written any poems in the critical third person voice?**

The first poems that come to mind are the ones that also "look like" that Gwendolyn Brooks poem in other ways: similar length, explicit narrative, and so on. For example, the poem that opens *First Fire, Then Birds*, "Even Be It Built of Boards Planed by Hand and Joined Without Nails, Yet May a Barn Burn," does try to "inhabit at once partiality and impartiality." The point of view is partial to "the struggling man" (not the three men who are burning someone else alive!), yet it is, I hope, impartial in the sense that (like the Brooks poem, which doesn't explicitly scold the self-righteous "lovers of the poor," just shows them doing what they're doing) it doesn't explicitly judge the three men, just lets the men's action critique itself.

In both cases ("show, don't tell" and critical third), the switch is from the "folk theory" that the poem communicates something that the poet (or the muse who speaks through the poet) knows and the reader learns, to the view I take as more apt, that both poet and reader alike may learn from the poem.

## **How does poetry help us see "each side as and through the other"?**

One widely-distributed tendency in us (we humans), exacerbated by the strong current of anti-intellectualism in U.S. society, is the urge to be relieved of the labor of assimilating information and synthesizing perspectives. "Fake news" is a land grab that takes advantage of that propensity: "don't do the work of checking it out, just take my word for it." What is depressing and frightening about "fake news" is that so bald, and so transparently meretricious, a version of this familiar strategy (that advertisers and lawyers and politicians have been using forever) is working. My attempt in *Demonstrategy* is to make a case for poetry as a stay against this strategy, by aiding in the labor of assimilation and synthesis.

## **How do you perceive the relationship between creativity and genius?**

I hope in *Demonstrategy* to participate in loosening the association between "creativity" and "genius." Treating genius as an exceptional, magical phenomenon sanctions aestheticizing the results of genius, treating the poem (or whatever the genius has produced) as something to be kept apart: locked in a glass case, protected and admired, yes, and dusted occasionally, but not to be touched or used or eaten or tended or played with.

## **Should we, as a society, reward creativity and promote originality in education? If so, how?**

I doubt that it's *possible* to reward creativity or to promote originality in education. Reward and promotion occur within, and operate as ways of securing, instrumental value. Creativity and originality are manifestations of intrinsic value, wholly independent of instrumental value. I doubt there's either a stick (the dimwitted preoccupation with "assessment" in higher education) or a carrot (the noble efforts of the MacArthur Foundation) that can overcome that basic contrast.

*Judith Jones is pursuing her M.A. in Creative Writing with a concentration in fiction from Wilkes University, where she serves as a graduate assistant with Etruscan Press.*

## OUTREACH PROGRAM

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**The Etruscan Press outreach program continues to pair acclaimed authors with underserved students in area high schools, working to increase the literacy of students and offering a general appreciation for the literary arts.**

Our outreach program provides several events to promote a love of literature across multiple demographics in the Mahoning Valley. The target audience has grown from middle and high school students to include incarcerated college students, disabled adults, and senior citizens. We strive to increase cultural and literary awareness amongst all these underserved populations.

Incarcerated men and women at Northeast Pre-Release Center, Trumbull County Correctional Institute and Trumbull County Correctional Camp are enrolled in Youngstown State University's writing and literature courses. Our approach in the outreach program provides a glimpse of the vast literary world to students whose education is too often constricted by ceaseless testing, restrictive rules, lacking resources, and low expectations.

In the summer of 2018, Lynn Lurie and Myrna Stone piloted the Incarcerated Writers Mentorship Program, a new Etruscan Press initiative that brings together Etruscan authors and selected incarcerated writers for a 15-week writing partnership.



## OUTREACH PROGRAM

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### **The outreach program goals include the following:**

- Expand cultural and literary awareness throughout Northeast Ohio and Northeast Pennsylvania
- Demonstrate a love of literature to young people
- Promote intercultural acceptance and understanding
- Prepare underserved students for success in college
- Plant "Little Free Libraries," which aim to bring Youngstown and Wilkes-Barre communities together through music and literature
- Continue to build alliances with community business partners to promote literacy, the love of reading, and enrich local neighborhoods.



# Interview with Lynn Lurie

by Pamela Turchin



The Etruscan Press Educational Outreach Program brings acclaimed authors to work with under-served students in area high schools and prisons in Northeast Ohio and Pennsylvania, increasing the literacy of the students and offering a general appreciation for the literary arts.

Etruscan author Lynn Lurie has been part of the outreach program for several years, working with high school students and incarcerated citizens. She describes what her experience has been like in Youngstown, Ohio. “I think of Youngstown as a microcosm of the state of the United States. What was once a vibrant community, now feels abandoned as a result of years of unabated economic downturn. As Youngstown continues to suffer declines in public services and public education, its residents have become increasingly susceptible to the opioid epidemic and its myriad horrors. There are few signs that there will be improvement fueling an overall sense of hopelessness. Yet Youngstown remains a place where immigrants still come, where children still show up at school, where adults still search for decent jobs and housing.

“The Youngstown outreach gives those who haven’t received the representation and acknowledgment they deserve an opportunity to be heard. We meet with the students, the social workers and the teachers who are involved in trying to make a difference. We listen to and disseminate their stories. We reward their hard work. The message we convey is there are people and institutions that haven’t given up on you. While only a tiny flicker of hope, the outreach program brings to Youngstown writers and artists, who, in their few days in the area, demonstrate our belief that every person, if given opportunity, strives to improve their lot and the lot of their families. Sadly, though, I have looked out at the young students in the high school and I have felt fear for them. They are subjected to great stress and anxiety so young in their lives and are often without any safe place to turn.

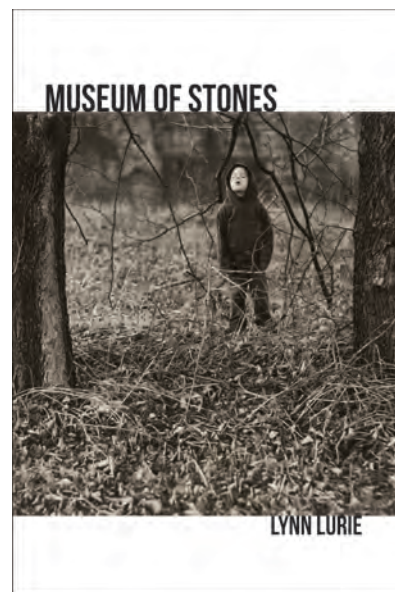
“My sense is many, if the poverty and lack of opportunity isn’t addressed, are destined to fill the prisons that the outreach program also seeks to serve. Many of the incarcerated men and women we have gotten to know strike us as being in prison, largely, because they are poor, undereducated and previously underemployed. In prison and in life they have been subjected to circumstances that are, in many cases, nearly impossible to imagine.”

In our changing world, how vital are small presses like Etruscan Press? Lurie responds, “Many of us, in the current political environment, know that what we are witnessing is unconscionable in a country such as ours, but we also feel powerless. Small acts count. Small outreaches have value. Join the conversation, we ask in outreach, allowing all of us to reach across the empty spaces and fill them with something that at that moment we are creating together: community, trust and kindness. We need more of this, especially as morale continues to deteriorate.

“Like many small presses, Etruscan allows its writers an opportunity to push against convention and be rewarded for work that is exceptional, innovative and some of it not fitting precisely within one genre or another. The encouragement the Press gives its writers to use language in newly minted ways is then in turn redirected to those in the Youngstown and incarcerated population. We say to them, who have too many times in their educational lives been told they are wrong, don’t worry about the grammar just yet, don’t worry about convention, about offending, but do worry about being silent. We read, we write, to communicate because only then do we endeavor to identify problems and find solutions. Art offers reprieve from despair. Art inspires us to look for common ground and to feel connected to one and other. Etruscan knows this.”

Lurie is the author of the forthcoming novel, *Museum of Stones* (Etruscan Press, 2019), which reveals a possessive/obsessive world of a love that must be released. An exceptional child collects too many rocks, invents a garbage recycler that runs amok, does not “play well.” His mother takes their relationship to extremes, threatening her sanity and health, in a wrenching yet often funny account.

What does Lurie want readers to know about her impetus for writing it? “*Museum of Stones* is my third novel. I have always thought each of us has one or two life changing events that are revisited again and again with the hope that with each new visit a greater meaning might be found. *Museum of Stones* is another iteration of book one and two, however, it addresses, in depth, a topic that I think is underrepresented in literature: the burden of giving life and maintaining life and by this I mean giving and maintaining a life that is capable of finding its purpose. *Museum of Stones* considers the impact we have on one another. It acknowledges the darkness within as its characters strive to locate that which makes them better.”



*Pamela Turchin received her M.A. and M.F.A. in fiction from the Maslow Family Graduate Program in Creative Writing at Wilkes University, where she serves as production editor at Etruscan Press.*

## DONATE TO ETRUSCAN PRESS

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**Etruscan Press is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and can exist only through the support of readers like you — those interested in sustaining the work of independent presses publishing quality literature. We ask you to join and support our mission.**

*“I hear America singing, her varied carols I hear.”*  
--Walt Whitman

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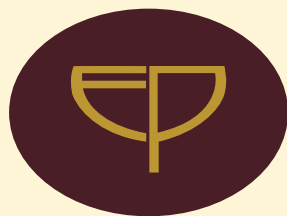
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## Etruscan Press 2018 Highlights

- Donated Etruscan books to Ellis Memorial Library in Port Arkansas, Texas following Hurricane Harvey
- Developed partnership with United Airlines “Books on the Fly” initiative, providing passengers on coast-to-coast flights from Boston to Los Angeles with Etruscan titles. In April, United reported their passengers have been thrilled with the Etruscan books donated. The overwhelming enthusiasm on the part of United passengers led to “Books on the Fly” to expand to other United cities, including Orlando, Honolulu and Portland, Oregon.
- Siena Oristaglio joined Etruscan Press Advisory Board
- Ten Etruscan authors participated in 16 panels, book signings and offset events at AWP18 in Tampa, held March 8-10 in Tampa, FL. Etruscan also co-hosted the AWP Old School Slam, which produced nearly 40 slam poets
- Robert Eastwood’s *Romer* was featured in the 20th anniversary issue of *Foreword Review*
- *Mr. Either/Or* author Aaron Poochigian visited Wilkes University and recorded an audiobook at the new WCLH recording studio, facilitated by Wilkes Communications Studies students
- The YSU Poetry Center and Etruscan Press announced the winners of the 2018 Etruscan Prize, offered to YSU CLASS undergraduate for one page of creative work in any genre:
  - 1st Place (\$500) Kelsey A. Metzger “A Beautiful Act of Hope”
  - 2nd Place (\$250) Mallory Radar “Force”
  - 3rd Place (\$150) Logan Burrows “A Wanderer’s Tale”
  - Honorable Mention (\$100) Dom Fonce “The Air Around Us is a Blanket”
- Implemented the Incarcerated Writers Mentorship Program through the Poetry Center at Youngstown State University, pairing selected incarcerated writers with Etruscan Press author mentors for a 15-week partnership
- A review of *Rough Ground* by Alix Anne Shaw was featured in *Publishers Weekly*
- Etruscan authors Bruce Bond, Dante Di Stefano and Aaron Poochigian featured in *Best American Poetry 2018*
- Etruscan Prize awarded to Sarah Bedford for her memoir piece (judged by Bruce Bond)



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