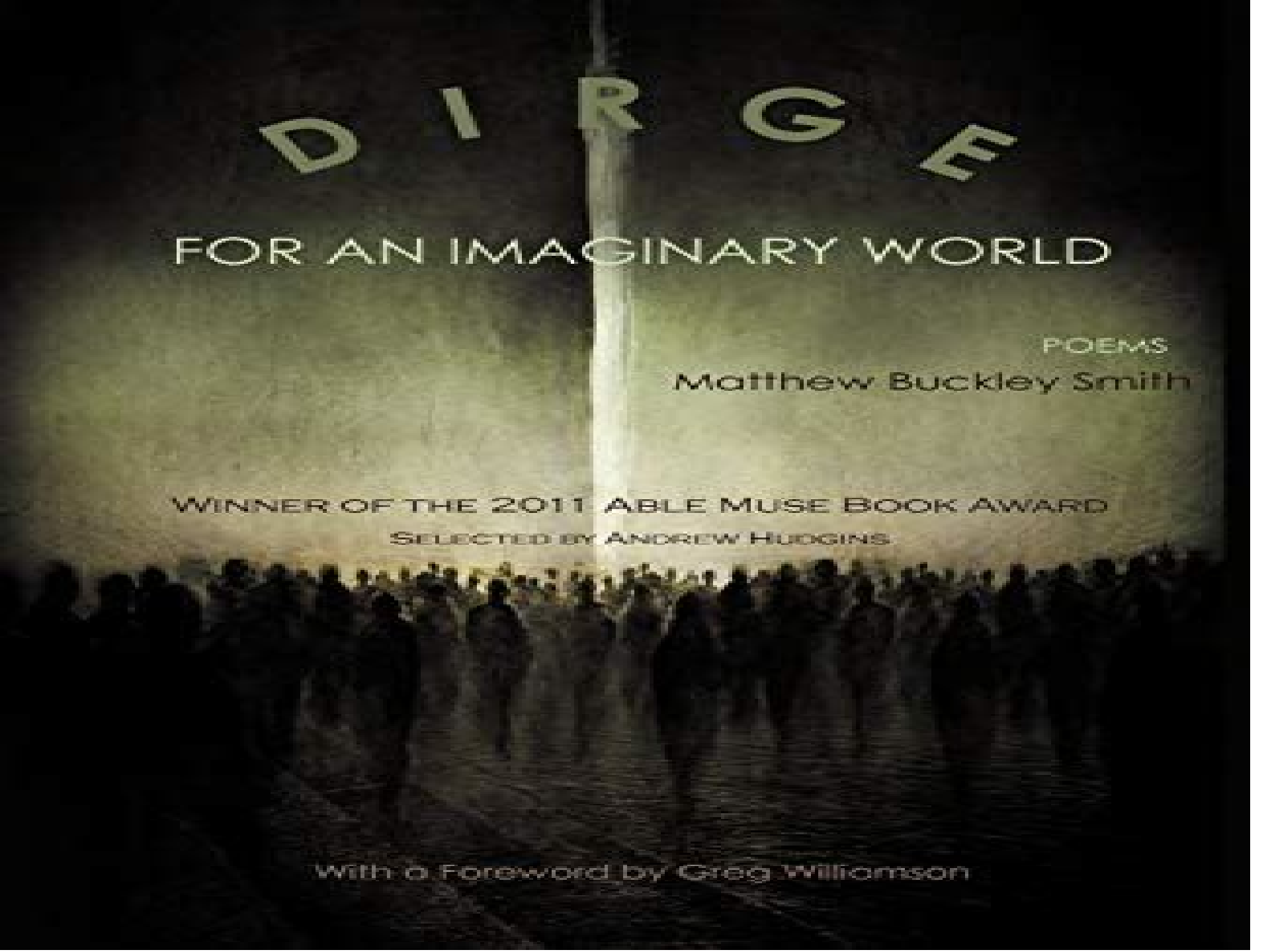




DIRGE

FOR AN IMAGINARY WORLD

POEMS

Matthew Buckley Smith

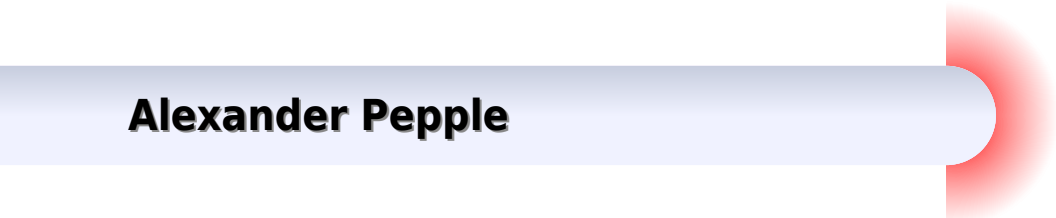
WINNER OF THE 2011 ABLE MUSE BOOK AWARD

SELECTED BY ANDREW HUGGINS

With a Foreword by Greg Williamson

Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems

Alexander Pepple



Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems:

Dirge for an Imaginary World: Poems Matthew Buckley Smith, 2012-04-10 Dirge for an Imaginary World from Matthew Buckley Smith is the winner of the 2011 Able Muse Book Award selected by Andrew Hudgins These are poems of breathtaking craftsmanship that find inspiration in the simplicity of the quotidian or the perplexity of the grand Smith is equally at ease musing about Neanderthals or God as he is with a ballet exam or highway medians These poems of personal and universal introspection are filled with grace and sparkle with abundant intelligence and wit This masterful debut collection is an event to celebrate PRAISE FOR DIRGE FOR AN IMAGINARY WORLD Wildness and precision and passion balanced with wit there are the hallmarks of Matthew Buckley Smith's superb Dirge for an Imaginary World In subjects great For the Neanderthals and small made great For the College Football Mascots the comic is rich with serious intent and gravity lightened with discerning wit But only a poet who lifts heavy and unwieldy subjects death lost love the absence of god knows the imperatives of graceful balance Andrew Hudgins Judge 2011 Able Muse Book Award In this deeply impressive debut volume of poetry Dirge for an Imaginary World Matthew Buckley Smith delivers a remarkable range of deft formal schemes temporal movements and varied settings We encounter sonnets couplets quatrains Sapphics sestets and so forth written with a slick delightful merging of technical expertise and smooth contemporary rhythms The range of subjects is equally and as charmingly eclectic from Neanderthals Dante Vermeer for instance to College Football Mascots Highway Mediums and Spring Ballet Exams Mental and linguistic agility generously challenge the reader in poem after poem Greg Williamson from the Foreword If a way to the Better there be it exacts a full look at the Worst wrote Thomas Hardy whose spirit moves through the fine poems of Matthew Buckley Smith's debut collection Like his blast beruffled predecessor Smith braves a clear eyed look at our fallen world mourning in elegantly precise language the sorrows inherent in setting out to map a promised land Out of reach and always just at hand but also wishing great mercy upon us travelers failed and failing These are poems full of both reckoning and grace made all the more beautiful for their humane wisdom Dirge for an Imaginary World is immensely impressive Carrie Jerrell

The Borrowed World (Able Muse Book Award for Poetry) Emily Leithauser, 2016-07-04 In The Borrowed World Emily Leithauser transforms keenly felt experience and bittersweet memories into poems of impressive craftsmanship She deftly muses on the dichotomies of among other things childhood and growing up the headiness of love gained and the pangs of love lost the joys of the nuclear family and the trials when it gets broken up Although a first book The Borrowed World is the seasoned work of poet of abundant talent coming into her powers and deservedly the winner of the 2015 Able Muse Book Award PRAISE FOR THE BORROWED WORLD In The Borrowed World Emily Leithauser's formal mastery her consummate knack for writing lines and sentences as crisp and elegant as the Edo prints to which she pays homage entwines with the sheer immediacy and vulnerability of the poet's voice Leithauser portrays the inevitability of loss in romantic and familial relationships and yet without ever offering false resolutions or pat

conclusions she manages to make her poems themselves convincing stays against loss I mean that this book is made to endure The Borrowed World marks the arrival of a major talent Peter Campion 2015 Able Muse Book Award judge author of El Dorado Emily Leithauser's first collection The Borrowed World is an elegant meditation on inheritance the vagaries of love and loss familial relations with all the devastating implosions within and our relationship to the past filtered through the flawed lens of memory These are deeply felt poems and Leithauser has a finely tuned ear for the lyricism of syntax and the enduring rhythms of traditional forms The Borrowed World is her stunning debut Natasha Trethewey 2012 2014 US Poet Laureate author of Thrall If her intensely accurate perceptions of the physical world and the beautiful forms in which she sets those perceptions were all that Emily Leithauser gave us in these poems they would be more than enough to satisfy the hungriest poetry reader But step by perspicuous step in poem after poem she enlarges and encompasses she broadens and deepens and transmutes perception into feeling feeling into thought and thought into revelation Vijay Seshadri winner of the Pulitzer Prize author of 3 Sections Love poems family poems narrative poems The Borrowed World is a moving and memorable debut which covers a lot of ground but is always rooted in actualities The poems are very well made too but their equally great distinction is to be well felt subtle in their account of the observing I and simultaneously generous and shrewd in their understanding of others Page by page they create a series of powerful cameos taken as a whole their larger purpose emerges to register what can be known and especially not known about our lives as individuals and to value what time allows us to enjoy on earth while admitting the brevity of our stay here Andrew Motion 1999 2009 UK Poet Laureate author of The Customs House I have read The Borrowed World several times and each time I find more in it to be delighted and touched by Emily Leithauser's art waits for you and I am sure that you will be as pleased and moved by it as I have been Michael Palma from the foreword author of Begin in Gladness

Vellum - Poems Chelsea Woodard, 2014-11-17 Chelsea Woodard's Vellum a finalist for the 2013 Able Muse Book Award propels the reader along new paths of discovery in the quotidian as in the mythical Its scope is far ranging a flower press received as a gift in childhood Tarot reading with a favorite aunt unexpected reflections at a tattoo parlor reminiscing about an old flame the discovery of rare volumes at the local library or auctioning off old toys on eBay Woodward's insights and sensibilities in the visual and performing arts are deftly realized in fine or broad strokes as in Copp lia The Painter and the Color blind Degas's Nudes or as in Still Life which muses that It's difficult to give back life to what's been cut off from the living Stories and scenes represented in popular artwork are reimaged in ekphrastics such as Self Portrait as the Allegory of Painting With excursions into the surreal myth is made lived or remade as in Philomela Pegasus and The Feral Child This is an exquisite debut collection that rewards the mind and senses with its formal impetus and deft musicality its precise and lively language its emotional compass PRAISE FOR VELLUM In her stunning first collection Vellum Chelsea Woodard offers us poems whose lucidity of attention grounds an imaginative realism where narrative becomes speculation witness becomes mystery and the body a space where desire and dread complicate

compassion's summons to the social order. The honed music here thus reveals a deeper vulnerability. Such is its gift, the way in which poems might be rooted to the difficulty and heartbreak of the physical and yet apart their keel and gristle finally set into some deathless disembodied flight. An astonishing book. Bruce Bond. In addition to her emotional maturity, part of what makes these poems memorable is Woodard's obvious mastery of language: her flawless sentences, the surprising way those sentences function and mean within the lines, the lines within the forms. Claudia Emerson from the foreword. Not the least of the attractions of this gifted young poet's first book is the exquisite searing precision of her language, the obsessively exact diction, the tropes that map with such stunning accuracy the emotional contours of her narratives, the gestural, almost tactile quality of her syntax, all of these talents focused sharply on what Howard Nemerov said was the singular most difficult achievement of poetry: getting something right in language. I predict for Chelsea Woodard a long and enviable career. B. H. Fairchild.

Asperity Street - Poems Gail White, 2015-08-31. *Asperity Street* is Gail White's most balanced poetry collection, exploring the breadth of human existence with cutting wit, irreverence, keen intelligence, and an uncommon mix of empathy and asperity. Besides the cynical or the lighthearted, which are hallmarks of White's work, there is a newfound earnestness and gravity in these poems in their survey and interrogation of the human condition. White journeys the span from nursery to hospice; in between, she navigates the prom, family occasions, mating gossip, and money matters with masterful formal dexterity. This is a collection that rewards the reader with a thoroughly entertaining and illuminating experience. PRAISE FOR ASPERITY STREET. In her remarkable collection *Asperity Street*, Gail White takes on the whole sweep of existence. The street becomes the road of a lifetime, beginning with a Southern childhood and ending with a hospice finale. Laconic, ironic, and comic, White's drily resourceful, wickedly companionable voice takes aim on patrimony, matrimony, religion, money, and the myth that assumes we choose our lives. With her sublime linguistic choreography, these poems dance to complex metrical tunes. We feel and hear them pulse with equal parts sympathy and vitriol. In Gail White's capable hands, *Asperity Street* unfolds as a brilliant mural we can return to again and again, as the poet does, still vulnerable and wiser each time. Molly Peacock, 2014. Able Muse Book Award judge, author of *The Paper Garden*. Gail White has done it again; here is another collection by one of America's wittiest, most technically adept, funniest, and most serious commentators on what it feels like to be human. Rhina P. Espallat from the foreword, author of *Her Place in These Designs*. I looked forward to reading Gail White's new book of poems, *Asperity Street*, because I know she is one of America's funniest poets, so when I got the manuscript, I sat down to read it immediately. I knew how much I would enjoy it. I was not disappointed. The first three sections of this four-part collection have wit and bon mots in good measure, socko endings, words I'd never seen in poems before, like *cloaca* or a made-up word ending substituted to satisfy a droll rhyme. But nothing prepared me for part four. Nothing procedural changed. The insights were as sharp as ever, the language exact and clear, the cleverness and dexterity with form as deft, the music as mesmerizing, but this was a serious poet I'd not encountered before. There was a deepening of vision, an enhancement of

feeling the rueful treatment of life and death took on a cutting edge that slices to the bone Don't miss reading this book

Lewis Turco author of *The Book of Forms* **Greed: A Confession - Poems** D.R. Goodman, 2014-12-02 *Greed A Confession* showcases D.R. Goodman's honed sensitivity to the human experience and the natural world around us Her sensible scientific background melds with a meditative outlook this is a vertebra from a cow It will win no prize It is just the childish wonder from which the rest derives This collection is a wellspring of keen observations insight and secrets of nature freely spilling out for those greedy for knowledge and enlightenment as in the immediacy of a certain joy that depends on nothing and wraps a tightness around your heart Here is a masterfully crafted finalist for the 2013 Able Muse Book Award one brimming with delight wit and insight PRAISE FOR GREED A CONFESSION I feel incredibly fortunate to have learned of D.R. Goodman's poetry Her technical control and powers of observation are extraordinary diction meter and rhyming superb Writing about an egret she details its mind a laser focused eye the weight of will attributes that apply equally to the poet In *Autumn in a Place Without Winter* she says The season brings no clarity but this we're here alive This poet is alive to everything You want this book It's terrific Kelly Cherry Goodman is greedy for things of this world not in the rapacious bottom line manner of plutocrats misers and Wall Street brokers but for the enlightenment of the senses and the enrichment of her poetry She's sharing the wealth she accumulates John Drury from the foreword At the core of *Greed A Confession* are natural ironies or disjunctures or improbabilities replete with intrigue The poems are frames through which we view the events D.R. Goodman is a scientist of natural history which for her includes human experience The poet shows us how to see The deep pleasure she takes in the process displays itself with characteristic irony in *A Certain Joy* Clive Matson D.R. Goodman's carefully crafted poems register a deep appreciation of the intricate meanings emanating from Nature's tangible riches Depth cannot hide from Goodman's keen eye And so it flutters sings Betrays itself upon the face of things From the sudden appearance of a hundred tiny freshly metamorphosed frogs to ginkgo leaves brilliant moonlit gold that spurs imagination to those old heroic dangerous quests of greed and sin the wondrous wealth of existence evokes joy that compels the poet to confess her greed in the presence of such good fortune Even the blithe partake of a certain joy certain particular and definite that is not attained or stumbled upon it simply is the gift of being There is a certain joy that depends on nothing One inhabits it It is there in the day when you walk out whether chill and gray or magnified by light and you inhale it Complex yet accessible these formal and free verse poems gift us with abundant insights to enjoy Beth Houston *Uncontested Grounds - Poems* William Connelly, 2015-03-24 *Uncontested Grounds* William Connelly's first full length collection of poetry is eclectic in people and places deftly moving from vineyard to beach to a Hollywood filmmaking set and even to the cockpit of a jet fighter This is also a collection of contrasts the din of war in *The Lead Man* versus the hot reductive shore of *R* as in *Aubade* *The Sailor* *Memento* and *In the Ninth Month* this last from the point of view of a woman about to give birth Connelly commands both strict form and free verse and his language is often fresh and unexpected *Uncontested Grounds* will stand as a notable book in this or

any year X J Kennedy Midwestern by birth William Conelly has lived on both US coasts as well as in England and the Middle East He is smart and imaginative and brings a thriving intelligence to life s experiences I found the poems in Uncontested Grounds original diverse and lucid Many are poems of place The first of these features a bankrupt farmer who ponders the blue remorseless beauty that first lured him onto the stricken acreage he must sell But the places vary and some exude enchantment I am taken by the touch of a drowsy wife s feet in Aubade and the couple along Florida s Gulf Coast pitying those who ll wake alone Conelly writes so well in a variety of forms I initially absorbed his insights heedless of their traditional underpinnings These poems easily bear rereading then they compose a fine selection from one of our best writers William J Smith Bad Fame - Poems Martin McGovern,2015-06-03 Martin McGovern s Bad Fame muses on the perplexities and certainties of the human condition often in soaring eulogies and searing elegies as in The Circle of Late Afternoon which asks Isn t there an art to giving myself away slowly like wheat opening to the sun or Processionalia where a bee abandons the tea roses and circle that black blossom of the widow s veiled face as if her tears were pollen and the bee could feather its legs with grief Be it lore set in Colorado or farther out the personal and regional tributes unravel the universally familiar and pertinent McGovern s debut collection is the work of a seasoned master in command of craft and themes PRAISE FOR BAD FAME Martin McGovern s long awaited well constructed first book gives itself away slowly artfully It is carefully considered quietly passionate and deeply humane Edward Hirsch There is an unforsaken paradise in these pages and a lot of ungodly anxiety Like Dubliners Bad Fame darkens deepens darkens through its sections understanding with Joyce the tidal pull of place that will never let us survive if we resist the current the blue snow not of Dublin but of memory of Colorado this extraordinarily unique McGovern flair for the Keatonish Buster aside mixed with lyrical intellection these poetic rooms with their many blue lights direct or indirect for us to turn on as night comes on David Lazar from the foreword Here are exacting sentences any number irregularly hugged into the ferocious clusters which are Mr McGovern s poems My likely favorite If the Light Could Kill Us does heavy duty as a garden unfurled at dawn the beloved still sleeping flame pink welts our love leaves on your almost too delicate skin brazen in this light And then the assault of a very different sentence Samuel Johnson is dead And Mrs Thrale And the kind cherub of a straitjacket she kept closeted should reason fail him thoroughly where s that deck coat now followed by other people s torments inspected so closely that this morning violence lingers like the last touch of a season Hence Only as I rise to pull the window s shade do you wake dusted and dazed as from a fever Strong as they are the sentences like the centuries are treated pitilessly as you can hear yet there is what the poet calls the shimmer of a teen movie throughout Resilient art and no loitering Richard Howard *Able Muse - a review of poetry, prose and art - Winter 2013 (No. 16 - print edition)* Alexander Pepple,Peter Svensson,Jehanne Dubrow,2013-12-02 This is the seminannual Able Muse Review Print Edition Winter 2013 issue Number 16 This issue continues the tradition of masterfully crafted poetry fiction essays art Interviewed by Anna M Evans FICTION Cheryl Diane Kidder Charles Wilkinson Blaine Vitallo Donna

Laemmlen ESSAYS A E Stallings Peter Byrne Philip Morre David Mason Chrissy Mason BOOK REVIEWS Rory Waterman Jane Hammons POETRY Rachel Hadas R S Gwynn Catharine Savage Brosman John Savoie D R Goodman Jeanne Wagner Richard Wakefield Melissa Balmain Tara Tatum Anna M Evans Matthew Buckley Smith Stephen Harvey Elise Hempel Marly Youmans Amanda Luecking Frost Rachael Briggs Chris Childers James Matthew Wilson Alex Greenberg Catullus Sappho Theocritus

Cause for Concern (Able Muse Book Award for Poetry) Carrie Shipers, 2015-10-26 Carrie Shipers's *Cause for Concern* traverses a landscape of assorted disasters such as overwork and layoffs the ill fated explorer circus mishaps nuclear disaster and radiation but at its heart is the personal disaster of spousal illness While a spouse might avow faith in the sentiment of love in sickness and in health the practice of such faith might come undone when faced with the reality of the ravages of illness on the stricken body of the beloved alongside the caregiving mate who could love her husband but distrust his body expect betrayal at every turn Full of incisive meditations on frailties and fortitude often delivered with visceral honesty *Cause for Concern* is spellbinding from start to finish and deservedly the winner of the 2014 Able Muse Book Award for Poetry PRAISE FOR CAUSE FOR CONCERN Carrie Shipers's magnificent endeavor aims to control the uncontrollable In her splendid collection *Cause for Concern* she gives us her spirited poems subversively satisfying in our era of cool wordplay Both her comfort with ambiguity and her sassy candor aid the poet as she writes of a wife who is hoodwinked into a necessary patience one she both chafes from and rebels against after her husband falls seriously ill In rhythms that alternate between hope and defeat the poems track the illness but also punctuate the couple's changed world with quirky observations and a scrappy spirituality Not to mention a canine companion Her poet's craft palpable in every arresting line makes the subtlest turns of vulnerability with enviable poise Molly Peacock 2014 Able Muse Book Award judge author of *The Paper Garden* Only a poet of unquestionable bravery and technical acuity could rehearse the quotidian details of a middle class middle aged existence with such exquisite irresistible and terrifying honesty Kwame Dawes author of *Duppy Conqueror* New and Selected Poems If illness is a country inhospitable to guests then Carrie Shipers's second poetry collection *Cause for Concern* is our guidebook preparing us for what we will find in the waiting room by the bedside in the bathroom or on the skin when the gauze is lifted These are naked open poems They say things that make us wince as when we look at an incision still puckered and red Shipers reminds us that our lives must first be prodded and cauterized if the injured parts are ever to heal Jehanne Dubrow author of *The Arranged Marriage*

Taking Shape - carmina figurata Jan D. Hodge, 2015-08-31 An eclectic mix of shapes and subjects populate *Taking Shape* Jan D Hodge's full length collection of carmina figurata sometimes called shaped poems pattern poetry or figure poems Hodge's many masterpieces include depictions of a saxophone a Madonna and Child a combination piano guillotine and other silhouettes of amazing difficulty and detail These poems are not only visually stunning they are also sonically beautiful and retain a transcendent freedom while conforming to both illustrative and metrical constraints *Taking Shape* is a visual feast of inspired poetry PRAISE FOR

TAKING SHAPE Are not all printed formal poems shaped poems The sonnet the hymn the sestina and the ghazal all have characteristic shapes rather like boxes that confine their subjects In Jan D Hodge s Taking Shape the subjects have burst from their cages and confront us immediately with what they are Then the words they are made of can reveal their inner beings The long closure of Spring describes the best way to read these poems I have long known what prayer is but I never knew what one looked like until I read Madonna and Child Fred Chappell author of The Fred Chappell Reader Here is a perfect matching of shapes and poetry Through a wide ranging array of subjects and tones Hodge s mastery of language within such challenging constraints is truly impressive Syntax and rhythm metaphor and symbol see for instance The One That Got Away or The Lesson of the Snow conversational snippets and quatrains are surprisingly nuanced Even the occasional poems wedding elegy Valentine s day Halloween Christmas an early morning poetry reading find new things to say and striking ways to say them These poems reward reading again and again Robert J Conley author of Mountain Windsong Jan D Hodge is the master par excellence of carmina figurata In Taking Shape you ll see such word pictures as the Chinese ideogram for spring a harpsichord poised before a guillotine a still life with quill pen and ink bottle T square and drafting triangle More amazing still Hodge forms many of the intricate images with metered language in one case in medieval alliterative verse In a poem about baseball Hodge writes forgiveness is the best we dare hope for in this bruised world the thinnest chance that lets us somehow slide home free here only by grace can we be safe Hodge knows of grace his poems are full of grace and Taking Shape like grace itself is a gift of utter beauty Vince Gotera Editor North American Review

Virtue, Big as Sin - Poems Frank Osen, 2013-08-28 Virtue Big as Sin is impressively wide ranging in theme and style It illuminates everyday vignettes with solicitous spotlights such as the bereaved son sorting the contents of his father s medicine cabinet or the father whose son s driver s education recalls the time his own unharnessed Mustang went bungeeing around a bend it celebrates the artist s creative highs or reflects on the misfortunate who is forever nearing the threshold of achievement aware that life may prove a most inept librettist and should thus be paired with our strongest song Osen s dexterity with both formal and free verse is apparent His wit and humor prevent the serious from becoming ponderous while his intelligent insight lends depth to the lighthearted Reading and rereading this outstanding debut collection it is easy to see why from the first poem to the last it is a worthy winner of the 2012 Able Muse Book Award PRAISE FOR VIRTUE BIG AS SIN Frank Osen s Virtue Big as Sin offers one witty elegant poem after another The rhymes are especially clever the meter sure the stanzas well shaped but this poet s sense of proportion is also reflected in wisdom and what is wisdom but a sense of proportion An urbane maker of sparkling phrases like that genuine Ur of the ersatz Osen can also write plainly movingly about a young girl s funeral And he reflects often on art itself which he so rightly calls the conjured awe Mary Jo Salter Judge 2012 Able Muse Book Award In his talent for tragedy and comedy and for mixing them Osen takes his place in a distinguished line of English language poets that runs from Chaucer and Shakespeare down to our day Timothy Steele from

the afterword Reading Virtue Big as Sin has left me with the sense of satisfaction and enduring pleasure that really good poetry always produces even when it also does the rest of what honest writing may do confirm suspicions about ourselves we wish we could refute bring to mind aspects of nature we'd rather forget and deliver alarming news about the future both public and private Frank Osen does all of this and much more all with grace and wit in language that makes the messenger thoroughly one of us Rhina P Espallat Frank Osen's poems revel in beauty and pleasure in technical dexterity and high gloss finish Readers who care about such things will be abundantly rewarded But the reveling is haunted by loss awful possibilities of failure a nothingness glimpsed beneath the carnival One of Osen's avowed tutelary spirits is Wallace Stevens and his probing of his subjects can often seem like an extended heart wrenching commentary on Stevens's line Death is the mother of Beauty The fragility of beauty the omnipresence of death and the intimate connections between them are everywhere present in these marvelously heartening and effective poems Dick Davis

Manhattanite (Able Muse Book Award for Poetry) Aaron Poochigian, 2017-11-06 Aaron Poochigian's prizewinning second collection of poetry Manhattanite is by turns frenzied and focused It examines New York's juxtaposed symbols of towering achievement and monumental desolation and then traverses the country to California's Central Valley where the poet reclaims his grandparents' home Poochigian consistently entertains whether his theme is lamentation or celebration a grizzled urban pigeon scavenging for the sort of faith that holds for here and now and vibes like song or an Ohio wind turbine an ungatherable iron flower seen juggling three arms worth of gale force wind Manhattanite is deservedly the winner of the 2016 Able Muse Book Award PRAISE FOR MANHATTANITE In Manhattanite Aaron Poochigian takes on the role of American flâneur for the twenty first century drifting through the frenetic metropolis at a dreamer's planetary pace This collection is a celebration of exuberant melancholy or melancholy exuberance slick lyric cum urbane pastoral A E Stallings from the foreword 2016 Able Muse Book Award judge Manhattanite gives us the Manhattan of speed chess players in the park tipsy tipplers tipping off the rooftops the night sky bright with city light tenants tenements and supers Aaron Poochigian is the poet in New York seeking a holy aura in the song of gunshots and spiral sirens picking like a grizzled pigeon through stray newspapers bottles bags and candy wrappers for a scrap of religion Each poem is a tower growing out of our human filth and scraping the sky with sky lines and together they build a city of words Put New York in your pocket It's inside this book Tony Barnstone Reading Aaron Poochigian's Manhattanite is a dynamic kinetic experience These poems travel at a fast clip pulling you along through cityscapes wastelands and other vistas Some of the poems tunnel downward plumbing depths of mood and memory Whichever way they move Poochigian's poems perform with such panache and brio that it's hard to know whether to laugh or cry I'd say do both and keep reading But be warned this isn't a feel good book It's a fearless book Rachel Hadas Thoreau once boasted that he had traveled widely in Concord Aaron Poochigian's title indicates that he has traveled widely elsewhere in the one borough worth experiencing through western deserts aboard an ultra modern train lipping through French or German woods and in a

Paris of naked bulbs and seedy cabarets In all of these settings he deftly choreographs his cast of nameless characters The concluding lines of Song Go and Do It claim I ll still swear we could be happy anywhere One sure location of that anywhere exists between the covers of Manhattanite R S Gwynn **Slingshots and Love Plums - Poems** Wendy Videlock,2015-06-22 Slingshots and Love Plums Wendy Videlock s third full length collection sometimes evokes the lightheartedness of The Dark Gnu and Other Poems previous to it sometimes enchants with the frolics and insights of her Nevertheless debut It especially shines with the brilliance of its wit its spirituality as in Videlock s fiat lux invocation for her Dear Reader resembling the first or the last word Harnessing proverbs myths paeans execrations riddles and pithy odes to the natural world and the people around her Videlock delivers an inspired collection that rollicks startles and uplifts PRAISE FOR SLINGSHOTS AND LOVE PLUMS From its title to its last poem Wendy Videlock s Slingshots and Love Plums offers a delicious variety of treats from witty send ups of contemporary mores to somber reflections on mortality love and friendship The pleasures include off kilter rhymes elegant turns earthy revelations and the skillful mockery of pretentiousness in its various forms David Caplan author of In the World He Created According to His Will Videlock arrests because she arrests the complacent drift of sense She is so good at it that what begins as a taste for her work can quickly turn into a craving for deliciously cryptic spiritual riddles David J Rothman author of Part of the Darkness from the foreword Wendy Videlock s poems in Slingshots and Love Plums sometimes hint at their Colorado origins but are never pinned down by a locality or a life story They are gleefully universal taking delight equally in huge abstraction and intimate real worldliness Whether enchanting imploring or arguing they always fascinate concentrating their acrobatics of thought and sound on the knots of the human experience Maryann Corbett author of Mid Evil Wendy Videlock is one of the few poets I can still read at length and purely for pleasure Playfully wise sharp tongued and surprising as ever Slingshots and Love Plums is yet another treasure to be read and reread at your leisure Thereafter you ll find all your thinking is rhymed but don t mind it s just dust from the master Timothy Green editor of Rattle Romance Language (Able Muse Book Award for Poetry) Amy Glynn,2024-01-02 Amy Glynn s Romance Language is a wellspring of culture nature natural phenomena myths esoterica A kaleidoscope of sciences and disciplines spanning archeology acoustics botany zoology psychology cosmology meteorology mythology are freely juxtaposed with the bliss of romance gained to longing for the one lost the celebration of nature and the teeming creatures therein to hope for their enduring sustenance A logophilic showcase and worthy winner of the 2022 Able Muse Book Award Romance Language transports the reader into a sensory and cerebral world of the real and imagined ever reaching for stimulus wisdom understanding and enlightenment PRAISE FOR ROMANCE LANGUAGE Romance Language thrills to the natural world in all its boggling multiplicity while reserving a barrage of tart ironies for the fallen humans who inhabit it the lovers who fail us and those long gone we can never let go of Glynn understands that science is no check to mystery that we subsist in an ocean of cadence that was here before us The beginning was music There was music first Her

songs channel that original music of tide chaos and rhythm with such fierceness and sorrow that we are compelled to listen Their effect is revelatory David Yezzi author of More Things in Heaven and Late Romance Anthony Hecht The poems in Romance Language consistently and seemingly without effort manage a remarkable feat they re unfailingly attentive to the situational subtext that underlies each foray whether into nature art or mythology With their rueful irony and wit their candor and self awareness these poems are not only technically flawless but also insistently and sometimes tetchily human Rachel Hadas 2022 Able Muse Book Award judge author of Love and Dread Amy Glynn has built upon her naturalist s precision her musician s ear and her talent for unexpected but apt metaphor with a heightened attention to what we learn in love Romance Language is as much about language though as it is about romance Glynn is a dazzling word hoarder and shaper With serious wit she entwines autobiography with the life of other creatures most beautifully birds and knows our own scale in the landscape and seascape For all her artifice her plainest truths are the most moving as when she hopes for a gift for seeing as a gift whatever happens to us These poems happen to the reader as a great gift too Mary Jo Salter author of Zoom Rooms and The Surveyors Glynn brings a polymathic sensibility to her writing conversant in both high and vernacular diction on subjects ranging widely from science and classical literature to current politics and pop culture The poems bold vibrant mercurial mysterious sometimes wickedly funny and always highly musical remind me that form is a living breathing part of our contemporary canon Whether fixed like the sonnet or ghazal or nonce or free verse these poems are constructed with great passion and precision and the result is a luminous powerful and utterly original outpouring Rebecca Foust author of Paradise Drive and Only ABOUT THE AUTHOR Amy Glynn is a poet and essayist whose work appears widely in journals and anthologies including The Best American Poetry She is the author of A Modern Herbal Measure Press 2013 She has received the Troubadour Prize The SPUR Award of the Academy of Western Writers Poetry Northwest s Carolyn Kizer Award and two James Merrill House fellowships among other honors She lives in the San Francisco Bay Area *Animal Psalms - Poems* Alfred Nicol, 2016-05-30 Alfred Nicol s *Animal Psalms* begins with the baseball field s organized uncertainties and continues on many a trajectory of animal ruminations with the human species well accounted for ending in the imbalance of the everyday Nuts around us The subjects include the elephant snake sheep skunk bee couple dynamics the trials and triumphs of the ruler or the everyman This is a collection rich in aphorisms on the bright and shady spectra of our interactions Recognizable soliloquies with the meditative self or dialogues with the beloved are unraveled for keen insights on the human condition deconstructing them until the knotty connecting threads are exposed Nicol gives us a mature collection of quiet reflection with wit and wisdom deployed through finely crafted poems of masterly formal dexterity PRAISE FOR ANIMAL PSALMS Dear reader I ve fallen in love with this book and that will happen to you too Read for instance the very last poem Nuts and read the great How to Ignore an Invisible Man and you re hooked forever Read all the rest these poems by Alfred Nicol which have our numbers and have his own too that tell about our lives and his and the lives of snakes

and bees and elephants with such humor and pity and praise for all of us human and animal in our situations It s impossible not to fall in love David Ferry author of Bewilderment winner of the National Book Award As the title Animal Psalms suggests there is reverence here a reverence that derives less from religion than from a religious attention to the things of the world from baseball games to zoo elephants to the newly beloved Nicol is a melodic writer called first to the music of words to speech that lets the sound carry the greater part of what is said He s also a poet whose images you won t soon forget They summon the real world and simultaneously render it otherworldly While the poems offer moments of ecstatic escape they re more often held in check by an Augustan wit ironic humor and a touch of Baudelaire Poise and wit prevail in these psalms they give us both despair inflected by light and illumination held fast by darkness Erica Funkhouser author of Earthly If we would only take the time to let one of Alfred Nicol s poems sink in through the brilliant latticed grid of its formal exterior how the truth of what he has to say about the human condition would hit us the way a line drive whips toward you on a dreamy summer s afternoon startling you back into the electric now I love these poems because they evoke for me the zany spiritual energy of the Beats welded as only a workman can work unwieldy things to the tempered grid of six centuries of formalism Don t be surprised if after reading these poems you find them turning back to their true subject dear reader which turns out to be none other than you Paul Mariani author of Epitaphs for the Journey Sea Level Rising - Poems John Philip Drury,2015-03-23 Sea Level Rising John Philip Drury s fourth collection revels in water flowing through rivers splashing on quays and docked vessels the wake of speeding boats the elusive tang of sea salt in the heart of the prairie even the water of baptism that rebirths the believer The uplifting lure of water as with a pair of honeymooners in Venice may inspire a love eager to divorce anything impeding its energy Our state of being might mirror water s when everything s in flux repeated spasms of wake and wave bright sun reflecting pool surges made up of intricate detail The waves of music like those of water are also prominent in the musings of this collection where that which rises and returns approaches music a blessing beyond sound These are masterfully crafted poems of uncommon inspiration and they whelm with a celebration and longing for that which ebbs or flows inside us PRAISE FOR SEA LEVEL RISING Sea Level Rising is about a lot of things all in some way the same mystery why we love tidal waters why we feel a kinship with the pulse and ebb of time and emptiness why we feel most alive when we stand at the fractal edges of perception why the singing of a good poem evokes all those correspondences we can t help loving John Philip Drury s new poems will please many and please often as he celebrates and with mastery the inexhaustible waters before and within each of us Dave Smith author of Hawks on Wires Poems 2005 2010 With candor and a close eye Drury introduces us to a world of love and literature nostalgia and new experiences a world where water pervades everything a constant and comforting reminder that what we depend on is like us also always in flux Drury is deft at numerous forms with a delicate touch You can become so swept up in a poem you may not recognize it as a sonnet until you reach its resounding couplet but the beauty of the form the force of its rhymes and the rapture of their song has resonated

since the opening lines and in all the energy that follows That's the wonder of this collection the film of beauty tides that keep on rising as Drury writes Sea Level Rising is an amazing achievement It should not be missed Erica Dawson author of The Small Blades Hurt John Philip Drury is a Marylander it makes all the difference The ever changing sea defines these poems Drury explores impermanence destiny the future love fame desire anchored by a rock solid formal mastery Land and sea interpenetrate here loom up fall away transmuting one into the other a way of seeing His favorite city is Venice a perfect metaphor for a sensibility too large to be only one thing or its opposite The masks and play of that ancient meeting place of land sky and sea divert us from the serious business of its survival and that might be a good way to describe Drury's art In impermanence through our art we survive James Cummins author of Still Some Cake Credo for the Checkout Line in Winter: Poems Maryann Corbett, 2013-09-30 Maryann Corbett's second full length collection Credo for the Checkout Line in Winter draws on profound experience of deep winter in the lived environment while keeping alive faith that the thaw will come and bring with it the bloom of uncountable rows of petals The themes of this finalist for the 2011 Able Muse Book Award range from the quotidian to the metaphysical Corbett's keen eye brings to focus uncommon detail Her masterful technical repertoire spans received forms metrical inventiveness and free verse This is poetry that amply rewards the reader with its boundless imagination insight and visionary delight PRAISE FOR CREDO FOR THE CHECKOUT LINE IN WINTER The crafted poems in Maryann Corbett's new book are vibrant She is a newborn Robert Frost with a wicked eye for contemporary life Each poem surprises Read her poems and feel the howling snow the mud and the jubilation of the first warm fertile spring days Willis Barnstone What makes Maryann Corbett such a rare excellent writer must be her talent for weaving together various artistic impulses so that her poems often sound both traditional and brand new both humorous and serious both worldly wise and as John Keats once put it capable of being in uncertainties She remains a poet of the first order and her poems are cause for gratitude and deep enjoyment Peter Campion from the foreword Corbett is as comfortable and affecting within the tight confines of the Old English alliterative meter Cold Case and the Sapphic stanza Paint Store as she is with her supple blank verse and terza rima Yet never does her rigorous craft interfere with the thoughtful insightful content of these poems A stunning collection from one of America's most gifted contemporary poets Marilyn L Taylor Do not dismiss this collection as domestic poetry women's verse Though grounded in seasonal rhythms and familiar settings it is as vigorous as reflective as important as any man's Sharply visual skillfully and cleverly crafted her poems draw out essences concentrated and persisting Beauty changes us calling up wonder from our deepest selves to its right place Catharine Savage Brosman These masterful poems announce themselves as winter pieces and indeed they are so full of sleet and snow that readers may wish to dress warmly But Corbett's winter a season when dull forms come in the mail and we eat tasteless stone hard gassed tomatoes is always lushly haunted by the other seasons the way a house in one of her poems is fronted by a three season porch Corbett is one of the best kept secrets of American poetry and this is one of the best new collections I've

read in years Geoffrey Brock Able Muse, Translation Anthology Issue, Summer 2014 (No. 17 - Print Edition) Alexander Pepple, 2014-05-25 This is the seminannual Able Muse Review Print Edition Summer 2014 issue Number 17 This issue continues the tradition of masterfully crafted poetry fiction essays art photography and book reviews that have become synonymous with the Able Muse online and in print After more than a decade of online publishing excellence Able Muse print edition maintains the superlative standard of the work presented all these years in the online edition and the Able Muse Anthology Able Muse Press 2010 ABLE MUSE fills an important gap in understanding what is really happening in early twenty first century American poetry Dana Gioia CONTENTS A TRANSLATION ANTHOLOGY FEATURE ISSUE Guest Edited by Charles Martin EDITORIAL Alexander Pepple GUEST EDITORIAL Charles Martin ESSAYS Michael Palma POETRY TRANSLATIONS BY X J Kennedy A E Stallings Rachel Hadas William Baer Willis Barnstone Tony Barnstone Michael Palma Dick Davis Jay Hopler Ned Balbo N S Thompson John Ridland Kate Light John Whitworth Andrew Frisardi Diane Furtney Teresa Iverson Julie Kane Maryann Corbett Bilal Shaw Mark S Bauer Michael Bradburn Ruster Heidi Czerwicz Claudia Routon Brett Foster Catherine Chandler Terese Coe Adam Elgar Rima Krasauskyt Kent Leatham R C Neighbors Deborah Ann Percy Dona Ro u Arnold Johnston Maria Picone Robert Schechter Wendy Sloan Jeff Sypeck Ryan Wilson Shifra Zisman Laine Zisman Newman POETRY TRANSLATIONS OF Victor Hugo Arthur Rimbaud C P Cavafy Fernando Pessoa Miguel de Unamuno Catullus Charles Baudelaire Francesco Petrararch Rainer Maria Rilke Asadullah Khan Ghalib Horace Martial Jos Luis Puerto Jos Corredor Matheos Cecco Angiolieri Delmira Agustini Heinrich Heine Christine de Pizan Nur Jahan Ayesheh ye afghan Jahan Khanom Reshheh Gaspara Stampa Dante Alighieri Armand Sully Prudhomme G rard de Nerval Fran ois Villon Euripides Georg Trakl Nelly Sachs Tautvyda Marcinkevi i t Gavin Douglas William Fowler William Dunbar Bertolt Brecht Antonio Malatesti Giovanni Raboni Fosildo Mirtunzio Pseudonym Zaharia Stancu Paul Val ry Tove Ditlevsen Sor Juana In s de la Cruz Giacomo Leopardi Paul the Deacon Giovanni Pascoli Meleager Lope de Vega Dovid Zisman **Figuring in the Figure** Ben Berman, 2017-03-20 In Ben Berman s second full length collection Figuring in the Figure poems laden with aphorisms puns and witticisms meditate on shapes angles thinking about thinking marriage and the joys and trials of bringing a daughter into the world among others Sometimes with a Frostian spirit sometimes with a touch of Zen the known is questioned and wisdom gleaned from daily experience This is a book that challenges us to reimagine the familiar both physical and spiritual while reminding us not to wander through this world without wonder PRAISE FOR FIGURING IN THE FIGURE Because design alone doesn t hold weight Ben Berman writes in his remarkable second collection of poems we need concrete material the image of a bridge over the sound of water In Figuring in the Figure Berman explores the nature of form in its deepest most complex sense His luminous details evoke a world of mutable forms and shapes that suggest the fragility of our lives The book culminates with a moving realistic yet lyrical sequence of poems about the birth of his daughter This is a quietly beautiful book that deserves attention and recognition Jeff Friedman author of Pretenders Figuring in the Figure is

a self portrait of a man becoming a father Ben Berman writes inside a modified terza rima that makes a virtue out of clarity and discernment The influence here of Frost returns us to Frost s virtues these poems make points and have a point of view Like Frost Berman is unsparing in his introspection He offers us an ongoing philosophy when faced with the pain and contradiction of everyday life to delay judgment and contemplate incompatible thoughts Rodger Kamenetz author of *The Jew in the Lotus* Ben Berman s nimble terza rima is the perfect vehicle for the poems of *Figuring in the Figure* Both expansive and structured the interwoven stanzas allow him to form and reform probing questions of identity without ever forsaking a deep musicality We watch the speaker ponder mouse droppings hit the wall in a marathon describe the great molasses flood of 1919 diaper a doll in a birthing class then try to manage his tiny fascist of a toddler who wouldn t stop until every bookshelf toppled like a failed coup His observations are enriched with various kinds of humor aphorisms riddles word plays and puns This book is wise and wonderful Beth Ann Fennelly Poet Laureate of Mississippi author of *Unmentionables* Ben Berman s fine clever poems are never merely clever Their frisky formal play is finally and importantly about the finding of forms that might adequately contain our feelings As his title *Figuring in the Figure* suggests Berman is fond of double meanings indeed he is in love with all the twists and turns of language as well as all the structures that display the pleasures of thinking If invention is his inclination order is his learned yet sly companion a partner he writes the type that coyly invites chaos to dance Lawrence Raab author of *Mistaking Each Other for Ghosts* *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* John Ridland, 2016-08-22 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* by the anonymous Gawain Poet or Pearl Poet is like *Beowulf* one of the greatest classics of English literature Hailed as the finest Arthurian romance this technically brilliant tale of enchantment faith temptation and chivalry is tautly constructed with a wonderfully rich vocabulary and vivid language that blends sophisticated atmosphere with psychological depth John Ridland s new Modern English translation unlike most presentations is complete covering every passage and word of the Middle English Northwest Midland dialect original with the same line numbering contents and meaning His is the only version written in a familiar modern meter pleasurable to modern ears yet retaining the spirit of repetition and alliteration of the medieval original And Dr Ridland s introduction and notes are enlightening This translation is a must have for unlocking all the pleasures and delights of the original classic PRAISE FOR JOHN RIDLAND S TRANSLATION With his loving rendition of a great classic into vigorous metrical lines John Ridland has given *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* a fresh lease on life I ve seen several other versions of this masterpiece but none so engagingly readable as Ridland s His preface too is useful and illuminating Here is a book to enjoy right now and to cherish forever X J Kennedy John Ridland gives us a recognizably English Gawain and a very pleasurable one at that The language is ours It is slightly elevated as befits a work so finely crafted but only enough to demand our attention Originally written in the same alliterative verse as *Beowulf* *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* was archaic in its own day now over six hundred years later alliterative verse can be as inaccessible as the pentatonic harp tunes that apparently accompanied it Ridland gives the

poem a long loose line that sings in the lyrical passages creeps in the spooky ones and cavorts in the comic ones Just as important the densely mythic ethos fully intact enriches every word Richard Wakefield Panoramas of banqueting and hunting closely observed rituals of dressing arming and game preparation and rich descriptions of landscape and weather Ridland's translation presents these in all their delightful over the top particularity Maryann Corbett from the foreword The language in which the consummate poet and translator John Ridland serves up this delicious story in verse is exactly what it deserves The descriptions are exuberant the narrative flows and exhilarates like the wine at the courts we're asked to imagine and the exchanges between complex characters so subtly flavored by intelligent diplomacy that it makes the dialogue of much current fiction seem by contrast like a six pack on the front stoop Read this book I suspect that like all enchantments it shifts and assumes different forms to different eyes But I do guarantee surprises and inexhaustible delight Rhina P Espaillet

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Table of Contents Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems

1. Understanding the eBook Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - User-Friendly Interface

4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems User Reviews and Ratings
 - Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems Free and Paid eBooks
 - Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems Public Domain eBooks
 - Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems eBook Subscription Services
 - Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems Budget-Friendly Options
6. Navigating Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems Compatibility with Devices
 - Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems Enhanced eBook Features
7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - Interactive Elements Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
8. Staying Engaged with Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - Setting Reading Goals Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time

12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Dirge For An Imaginary World Poems
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
 - Exploring Educational eBooks
14. Embracing eBook Trends
 - Integration of Multimedia Elements
 - Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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