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WINTER | SPRING 2018

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Tupelo Press is an award-winning independent literary press that publishes fine fiction, nonfiction, and poetry in books that are a joy to hold as well as read. We are a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and rely on public support to fulfill our mission to publish extraordinary work that may be outside the realm of large commercial publishers. Donations are welcome and are tax-deductible.



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<https://www.tupelopress.org/the-3030-project-2/>

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A celebration of the collective poetic process, the MLP is being written, couplet by couplet, by readers and writers around the world, and published online by Tupelo Press. Your contribution is part of the dynamic synergy of this unique art form.

<https://www.tupelopress.org/the-million-line-poem/>

Tupelo Quarterly

Tupelo Press discovers luminous writers, gives each author the vessel of a beautiful book, and speaks to the diversity of influences upon contemporary art and culture. *Tupelo Quarterly* extends and expands upon that vision in a digital milieu, publishing work by emerging and established writers and artists of many sensibilities and styles. *Tupelo Quarterly* cultivates a generous artistic community, celebrates intellectual curiosity and creative risk, and presumes abundance. We hold the gate open, not closed.

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from *Silver Road*

Who is the one without home,
who crosses any border from the
place he knew and was known
into a place where neither is
true?

That silver road is longer than
its miles, more fraught and
dangerous
than any myth could tell, more
dehumanizing than any
background checks or strip
searches could intimate.

And if space is finite, thought
is finite, time is finite, then
who are
we in one place and who are we
in the other? Who are we before
we leave and who are we after?

Silver Road: Maps, Essays and Calligraphies

hybrid memoir: prose and poetry by Kazim Ali

In 1953, Yoko Ono wrote a score called “Secret Piece,” an open-ended formula for musical performance in a forest at daybreak. Beginning with this invitation to creation, and using essays, diary entries, prose maps, and verse fragments, Kazim Ali marks a path through quantum physics, sixth-century Chola Empire sculptures, the challenges of literary translation and of climate change, and destruction of a priceless set of handmade flutes by airport security.

“Here is a vast, courageous text investigating race, separation, the molecules of space, the love of his man, and many other parts of this Living Universe in an entirely fresh and exhilarating perspective.” — **CACONRAD**

“Kazim Ali extends to us a living and moving wondering in *Silver Road* — an active and rational thinking, yes, though poured from the vessel of body, its clay, breath and frailty . . .” — **Layli Long Soldier**

“Poet Ali . . . transforms readers into his companions on his travels around the globe and on an interior philosophical quest. Ali cleverly spurns convention for this excellent mixed-genre collection.” — **Publishers Weekly**

Kazim Ali is author of eighteen previous books, including poetry, novels, memoirs, and translations. Born in the United Kingdom to Muslim parents of Indian, Iranian, and Egyptian descent, he grew up in Canada and the U.S. and now teaches at Oberlin College.

\$17.95 Trade Paperback
ISBN 978-1-936797-99-8
January 1, 2018

Leprosarium

Poems by Lise Goett

When the manuscript that became Lise Goett's new book *Leprosarium* was chosen for the Winner Memorial Award of the Poetry Society of America, judge Toi Derricotte's citation said, "This is dangerous art, as serious as a heart attack, unsparing mostly of the poet herself, and as intensely rewarding as it is unsettling." Goett's poetry, infused with a bountiful vocabulary, is rife with extravagantly dramatic forms that take in the sweep of western art and religion via relationships between those with power and those who've suffered their commands.

"Luminous, symphonic, and suffused with mystical awareness . . ." — Carolyn Forché

"A book of intellectual drive and irrefutable grace in poems that wrestle with humanity's stewardship or annihilation of all that is wild and passionate at the core of existence."

— Roberto Tejada

" . . . an amazingly sustained book." — Richard Howard

" . . . an impassioned chatelaine of sound . . . Drawn to defiance and disavowal as much as to ecstasy and devotion . . . What a consistently astute, lush, and startling collection!" — Cyrus Cassell

Lise Goett's poetry has earned wide acclaim, including *The Paris Review* Discovery Award, the PEN Southwest Book Award in Poetry, the Robert H. Winner Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America, and the Barnard New Women Poets Prize for her first collection, *Waiting for the Paraclete* (Beacon Press, 2002). She lives in Taos, New Mexico.



from "Molest the Dead"

There is no truth in news, no news
in truth.
Skoal, my liege. If I am drunk,
you are
the bar, the peaches of San Gersolé
couth
and sweet. I down these hours,
bare

of cartilage, patient some widening
of your breadth within me.
Meddler, medlar,
I am that fruit that must rot to
ripen,
rind browning on the branch until
made

ready for your pluck, your coming.
I stand
impeached. I love the flesh, its
flush, its foison
under eager hands, the skin's
glissando—
and sex, how its truth lights up
the dark, moistens

the arid desert in us, heaven
leavened or made hollow—by your
leave.

\$17.95 Trade Paperback
ISBN 978-1-946482-03-7
February 1, 2018



Land of Fire

Poems by Mario Chard

Winner of the Dorset Prize, selected by Robert Pinsky

The poems in Mario Chard's first collection follow three entangled strands—a contemporary immigrant story, echoes of the Fall in *Paradise Lost*, and meditations on fatherhood in the shadow of Abraham's command to sacrifice a son. The poet speaks from the American hemisphere, immersed in histories of loss from long before Magellan first glimpsed his *tierra del fuego*.

Windfall

We lived by the rich and thought
we were rich.
Mornings we walked by rows of
cypresses
and missed their shadows in our
gait. We saw
men raise a hundred towers
dressed like pines
that never grew. The way we
knew a false
pine from the true was how it
moved in wind.
At night we heard speakers in
the false pines
hum, then cue, but no one spoke.
We slept by
each other and thought we slept.
In our dreams
the palms were leaning in the
wind, straining
to hear. The cypresses confused
our gaits.
But each time we woke, the
towers shook more
like pines. Their needles grew.
Soon all the palms
were signing wind. But no one
braced for wind.

“*Land of Fire*, with a kind of understated, shadow title — *Tierra del Fuego* — embraces the reality of collisions and meldings . . . conveys that shifting reality in lines that sing, innovating choral patterns and refrains that honor the past by re-conceiving it.”

— Robert Pinsky

“Each poem progresses in a mode of fairy tale or fable toward a sense of wisdom one could only gain through the deepest experience of regret. Somehow that regret makes this a book of comfort, a book to love.” — Jericho Brown

“[S]uch lovely ruthless danger, dream, repetition, heart-stopping realization in this book. . .” — Marianne Boruch

“Mario Chard writes spare, dynamic poems of muscular strength and deeply moving witness.” — Naomi Shihab Nye

Mario Chard was born in northern Utah, the son of an Argentine immigrant mother and an American father. Recent poems have appeared in the *New Yorker*, *Boston Review*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *FIELD*, and *Image*. Winner of the “Discovery” / *Boston Review* Poetry Prize and a former Wallace Stegner Fellow in Poetry at Stanford University, he currently teaches in Atlanta, Georgia, where he lives with his wife and sons.

\$17.95 Trade Paperback
ISBN 978-1-946482-09-9
March 1, 2018

Legends of the Slow Explosion: Eleven Modern Lives

Essays by Baron Wormser

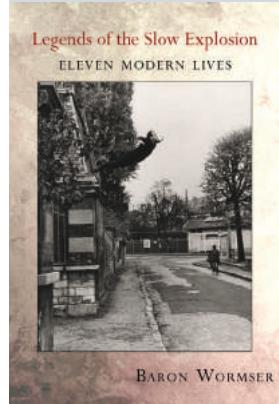
Multi-genre literary master Baron Wormser's new book is about people from the mid-twentieth century whose lives created ripple effects beyond their individuality. Including electrifying portraits of Rosa Parks, Hannah Arendt, Miles Davis, Audrey Hepburn, Willem de Kooning, among others, these are not conventional "biographical" essays. Wormser has created a molten, multi-dimensional prose that brings a reader into the visceral presence of these human catalysts.

"... provocative and subtle — a latter-day version of Gertrude Stein's *The Making of Americans*, about people who swore allegiance only to the cultural forms they loved." — Tom Sleigh

"Wormser's intimate and engaging portraits ... offer new ways to reflect on the shaping forces of history, the mystery of human agency, the nature of wisdom ... an unnerving interrogation ..." — Christopher Merrill

"Wormser writes about an eclectic range of major figures, each of whom lived under the 'annihilating strength of the shadow' of nuclear war ... They made their lives into works of art, and 'what goes into the making is boundless.'" — Jay Parini

Baron Wormser is the author of fifteen books, including the novel *Tom o' Vietnam* and the memoir *The Road Washes Out in Spring*. He has been poet laureate of the state of Maine (2000–2005) and received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. He offers workshops throughout the United States, teaches in Fairfield University's MFA Program, and lives in Montpelier, Vermont.



from the Preface

I do not offer these legends as strict accounts. What interests me is the sense that something both larger and deeper than an individual life transpired. It is easy to lose that sense in the forests of detail, however important each of those details is. I respect those details and have evoked many of them in these pages but at some point we have to ask the larger question: What was that about? If we cannot trust the bold outlines an exceptional life creates then we have little to go on as we move blankly forward in the modern times of another century. To query a series of lives lived within the same era is to ask what stature was present and what wisdom a life could obtain. We seek to cloak ourselves in reason but exaltation and strangeness, insult and desire, all beggar that reason.

\$19.95 Trade Paperback
ISBN 978-1-946482-10-5
April 1, 2018



feast gently

Poems by G.C. Waldrep

In his most autobiographically transparent (and most comical) collection to date, Waldrep explores the intersections between body and spirit, faith and action. These are lyrics of incarnation, of method and meat-hood, of illness and the vicissitudes of love, earthly as well as heavenly, occupying the space between desire and gratification, between pain and praise.

from "Candleweb, Thaw"

In prelude the night moves
its stiff sentience away
from the windowsill you call
Marry me, a story the sky
diffraction as if it were
a telegram, unbuttered toast.
We are not sentinels
here, in this unfolding larch
of wax crowns riven
with cropmarks pissed
listlessly by winter
wolves. A movie concludes
with a call from the stagestruck
set of Pentecost
unplowed & lightly elemental,
O my unbuttoned birds
the monster rains moan &
how we bandage them ...

"This is a book of visions, one that gives us a sound heard in extremity . . . This is a last moment, when no story we pretend to tell of ourselves ever will suffice. Only the lyric will, its belling of a spell. I love Waldrep's work." — Ilya Kaminsky

Critical acclaim for Waldrep's *Archicembalo*:

"While lucid, these poems . . . create a sense of absence that yearns to be present, of a present on the verge of disappearing, and a new language to be rolled around the tongue and set sailing . . ." — Sadiq Alkoriji, *Library Journal*

"Often breathtaking in its erudition, at other times imbued with a forceful simplicity, tricky in its sensibility yet clearly driven by affection, this . . . collection from the prolific Waldrep (*Disclamor*) might be the best book of prose poems to appear in a long while." — from a starred review in *Publishers Weekly*

G.C. Waldrep is the author, co-author, or editor of twelve previous books, including *Testament* (BOA, 2015), and *Archicembalo* (Tupelo, 2009), winner of the Dorset Prize. He has received prizes from the Poetry Society of America and Academy of American Poets and numerous other honors. He lives in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, where he teaches at Bucknell University, is editor for the journal *West Branch*, and serves as editor-at-large for *The Kenyon Review*.

\$17.95 Trade Paperback
ISBN 978-1-946482-11-2
May 1, 2018

Good Bones

Poems by Maggie Smith

Featuring “Good Bones,” which has made a difference to so many people around the globe—called “Official Poem of 2016” by the BBC/Public Radio International

Named one of *Entropy*’s “Best of 2017”

“The title poem of *Good Bones* went viral this year because its central theme — wanting to believe in the goodness of the world for the sake of one’s children — connected with so many people. The other pieces in this collection, Smith’s third, provide a fuller understanding of the complexities faced by the speaker . . . No matter the style or subject, the writing remains honest, compassionate and graceful.” — **Elizabeth Lund, Washington Post**, “The Best Poetry of 2017”

“While the now-famous poem lends its name to Smith’s third poetry collection, and remains one of the book’s highlights, readers will find a far greater bounty within.” — **Adam Tavel, Plume**

“Come for Smith’s viral title poem, but stay for her range as she builds a notable collection, one suffused with grace, and—dare I say it—hope.” — **Nick Ripatrazone, The Millions**

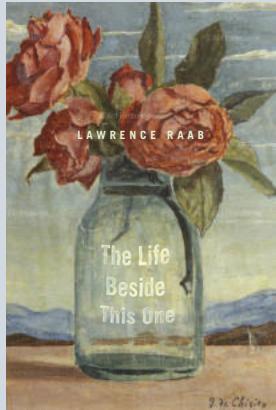
Maggie Smith’s previous books are *The Well Speaks of Its Own Poison* (Tupelo, 2015), *Lamp of the Body* (Red Hen, 2005), and three prize-winning chapbooks. Her poem “Good Bones” has gone viral—retweeted and translated across the world, featured on the TV drama *Madam Secretary*, and earning news coverage in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Slate*, the *Guardian*, and beyond. Maggie Smith was named the 2016 Ohio Poet of the Year.



Heart

A child of, say, six knows you're
not the shape
she's learned to make by
drawing half along a fold,
cutting, then opening. Where do
you open?
Where do you carry your dead?
There's no locket
for that—hinged, hanging on a
chain that greens
your throat. And the dead inside
you, don't you
hear them breathing? You must
have a hole
they can press their gray lips to.
If you open—
when you open—will we find
them folded inside?
In what shape? I mean what cut
shape is made
whole by opening? I mean
besides the heart.

\$16.95 Trade Paperback
ISBN 978-1-946482-01-3
October 1, 2017



Death's Many Special Agents

Try to pick us out in a crowd,
any of us,
all of us—strangers, neighbors,
your best friend. You can never

get it right, seeing only
who we've chosen to be.
Now picture everything you've
heard

about the basements where we
operate—
how no one returns
to his family, or is allowed

to stay the same. It's all true.
Does it give us pleasure? Listen—
what happens has to happen.

Didn't our children once play
together?
Didn't we watch them in the park
as the leaves of the oaks

were beginning to fall? You
may not
have noticed, but I remember
those days.
How glad you were just to be
there.

\$16.95 Trade Paperback
ISBN 978-1-946482-04-4
November 1, 2017

The Life Beside This One

Poems by Lawrence Raab

The poems of Lawrence Raab are accessible yet mysterious, their complexities an aspect of (and sometimes hidden by) their clarities. The title of his ninth collection suggests both the life we live and another life alongside—what might have been but wasn't, yet remains in the imagination.

"The casual tone," Mark Strand has written of Raab's work, "the offhand remark, are not only the means by which sense establishes itself, but also the way it take on a miraculous resonance."

Praise for Raab's *Mistaking Each Other for Ghosts*:

"... beautiful, bewildered, disquieting, and full of paradoxical laughter and contemplative solace." —**Tony Hoagland**

"Raab's is a wholly American voice that reveals itself in sardonic humor and reflection as the poet addresses universal, philosophical quandaries; heaven and hell; and everything in between." — **Mark Eleveld, Booklist**

"What binds this collection is ... his ability to move across registers with consistency and well-tempered feeling."

— *Publishers Weekly*

Lawrence Raab was born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and is author of eight previous collections of poems, including *What We Don't Know About Each Other* and *Mistaking Each Other for Ghosts*, both finalists for the National Book Award, and a recent book of essays, *Why Don't We Say What We Mean?* He teaches literature and writing at Williams College.

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