

## NEW TITLES FOR 2022

### OBAMA'S CHILDREN

BY EARL S. BRAGGS

ISBN: 978-1-948692-72-4 PAPERBACK 16.95

ISBN: 978-1-948692-73-1 EBOOK 9.99

6 X 9, 76 PP

DECEMBER 2021

POETRY

*A universal quest for human dignity and acknowledgement made specific through the Black experience.*

#### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT *OBAMA'S CHILDREN*:

If poetry is music, Earl Braggs is its composer. And what he composes is jazz—smoky, sensual, serpentine stanzas of jazzy poetry at its improvisational best: staccato-trumpeting lines, tempo-driven voices, melodic repetitions, lowdown bluesy fragmentations of logic and sensibility... pouring into the corners of our consciousness, ragtiming us into booty-shaking highs and tenor-saxing us into deep deep downs. Such is jazz. Such is poetry. Such is jazz and poetry together. And such is this jazz-riffing collection.

—[George Drew](#), author of [Drumming Armageddon](#) and [Fancy's Orphan](#)

"Like notes of jazz played between notes of jazz music," *Obama's Children* is a headlong riff on the motifs of race, history, legacy and love. These vital poems reverberate with elements of improvisation and pastiche and are galvanized by exultant word play and an ecstatic vividness of spirit. Of Earl S. Braggs' many collections, *Obama's Children* is a fearless, sparkling magnum opus.

—[Gianna Russo](#), Wordsmith of the City of Tampa, and author of [One House Down](#)

Earl Braggs is his own man. His poems are a personal and public history of America told in numerous personas, poetic syntax, and a dancing rhythmic narrative that carries the reader into stories that seem familiar yet are often a bit askew. It's like looking at the world through old glass windows—streets, cars, trees, people, and history are wavy and grainy but not untrue. The truth is in the spirit, in the heart of the work and the poet. Book after book reveals what it's like to be a Black man in the United States, and therefore, what it's like to be an American.

—[Rick Campbell](#), author of [Provenance](#) and [Gunshot, Peacock, Dog](#)



A country boy from Wilmington N.C., **Earl S. Braggs** is a UC and Battle Professor of English at the U of Tennessee at Chattanooga. His awards include the International Jack Kerouac Literary Prize and the Anhinga Poetry Prize. Braggs is the author of fourteen poetry collections including *Negro Side of the Moon* and *Ugly Love*.

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## DEAD FISH WIND

BY COOPER LEVEY-BAKER

ISBN: 978-1-948692-74-8 PAPERBACK 19.95

ISBN: 978-1-948692-75-5 EBOOK 9.99

5 ½ X 8 ½, 204 PP

JANUARY 2022

FICTION

Cicely has got problems. Stuck working a crappy job to take care of her deadbeat father, she's living just a step above homelessness in a town ruled by a remote, affluent elite and stricken with a catastrophic outbreak of red tide. But then Cicely makes a friend, perhaps her first, and she starts dreaming of a way out of her predicament. It's a scheme that involves stolen placentas and a dangerous outlaw doula that leads to a confrontation with the malignant forces around her and the mother who abandoned her as a child.



In this grim, comic debut novel, author Cooper Levey-Baker tells a bizarre coming-of-age story in prose that is lyrical, gross, tragic, goofy, and maybe even a bit tender.

**Cooper Levey-Baker** is a writer and journalist. His fiction has appeared in the *Sierra Nevada Review* and Burrow Press's Fantastic Floridas series, and his journalism has won multiple awards from the Florida Magazine Association and the Florida Society of Professional Journalists.



### WHAT READERS ARE SAYING ABOUT *DEAD FISH WIND*:

For those who adore the dystopic cli-fi, the not-quite-today, the Jeff-VanderMeer-on-a-plate-in-Florida, Cooper Levey-Baker's *Dead Fish Wind* does it all. Cicely, our heroine, in her pasties serving Cub Scouts. Cicely confronting her father with a boxcutter. Cicely inching toward happiness with Zinnia, a remote chanteuse. *Dead Fish Wind*, Levey-Baker's first novel, is set to explode. But beware the orange-scented golf course, the male nurse in blue scrubs, and, of course, the fish.

—Terese Svoboda, author of *Great American Desert*

The scariest part of Cooper Levey-Baker's near-term dystopia in *Dead Fish Wind* is that after our poisoned, red tide summer, that future is already here. Levey-Baker's heroine, Cicely, scrapes by in an ecologically ruined Florida. One wishes this taut novel, Levey-Baker's first, could serve as yet another eco-warning. Instead, it's a guide on the dark choices we will all soon have to make to survive.

—Tony D'Souza, author of *Whiteman*, winner of the Florida Book Award for Fiction

The Florida depicted here is one we know and one we don't want to know; it is our present and it is our possible future. Levey-Baker's achievement, through wondrous prose and compelling characters, is to vividly bring us into this debauched and debased world and, perhaps, offer us a plaintive warning. *Dead Fish Wind* is an important novel from an impressive new writer. It's not to be missed.

—Brian Petkash, author of *Mistakes by the Lake*

## ALL I SEE IS YOUR GLINTING: 90 DAYS IN THE PANDEMIC

POEMS BY GIANNA RUSSO

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENNY CAREY

ISBN: 978-1-948692-99-1 HARDBACK 28.95

ISBN: 978-1-956440-00-3 PAPERBACK 19.95

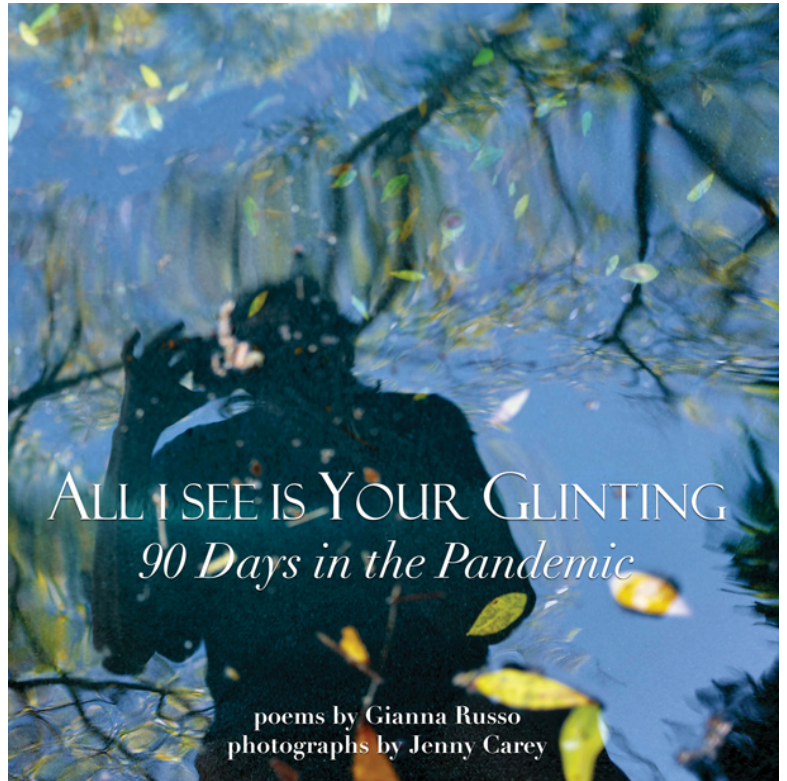
ISBN: 978-1-956440-01-0 EBOOK 9.99

8 X 8, 90 PP

JANUARY 2022

POETRY / PHOTOGRAPHY

*All I See is Your Glinting*, a dialogue between poems and photographs, documents each day of the last quarter of 2020. Against the backdrop of the pandemic, ninety poems written in a created form called the daily, detail the small meaningful moments in daily life. Stunning photographs of the natural world and intimate environments enrich and further open the text. Together, they refract and reflect our collective experience through a personal lens. *All I See is Your Glinting* champions the value of nature, friendship, family, and love in coping with individual and universal suffering and grief.



**Gianna Russo** is the inaugural Wordsmith of The City of Tampa (2020-22). She is the author of the poetry collections, *One House Down* (Madville Publishing, 2019) and *Moonflower* (2011), winner of a Florida Book Award. She has published poems in *Green Mountains Review*, *Gulf Stream*, *Negative Capability*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Apalachee Review*, *The Sun*, *Poet Lore*, *saw palm*, *The MacGuffin*, *Florida Review*, *Tampa Review*, *Ekphrasis*, *Florida Humanities Council Forum*, *Karamu*, *The Bloomsbury Review*, and *Calyx*, among others. She is Assistant Professor of English and Creative Writing at Saint Leo University, where she directs the Sandhill Writers Retreat. A third-generation Tampa native, a mother and grandmother, Gianna lives in an almost 100-year-old bungalow with her husband Jeff Karon and their cat Gingko.



**Jenny Carey** is a photographic artist residing in Florida. Her work explores the themes of memory, loss, and sense of place. Ordinary subjects and intimate environments are used to evoke memories, document the intangible, and narrate unseen beauty. She began her practice as a photojournalist and that perspective is evident in her work. Her images have been exhibited nationally, most recently at The Tampa International Airport Gallery (Florida), Manifest Gallery (Ohio) and Davis Orton (New York). Her photographic works are included in numerous private collections. The natural environment is often the subject matter in her images, but frequent travels have opened narratives with urban elements. She is the founder of Creatives Exchange, a collective of professional women artists in Tampa, Florida where she maintains a studio practice.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT *ALL I SEE IS YOUR GLINTING: 90 DAYS IN THE PANDEMIC*  
with poems by Gianna Russo and photographs by Jenny Carey:

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Gianna Russo's *All I See is Your Glinting* is a beautiful, timely collection of delicate, haiku-like poems that shape-shift and transform into a magical, wide-ranging long poem, a necklace of small beauties to wear in grief and celebration. I love the way the subtly changing form of these poems unfolds across the days, building resonances that ultimately feel like revelation. This is formal poetry in the best sense of that word: the limitations Russo has imposed upon herself guide and control her improvisations while sustaining a scintillating tenor of surprise and delight. Paired with striking photographs by Jenny Carey, there's great wisdom in this supple and inventive verse—not a word is superfluous, not a moment of perception lost.

—Michael Hettich, author of *The Mica Mine*, winner of the 2020 Lena Shull Book Award, and many other books of poetry

In this poignant and gentle book, poet Gianna Russo strikes out to cross the pandemic in a form that she has invented, the daily. Each day is an image, a number of words, and an attempt to contain fear and make sense of the wrenching fragility that had become viral and global. Paired with Jenny Carey's healing photographs, this innovative and luminous book goes straight for the heart.

—Janisse Ray, author of *Red Lanterns* and *A Cracker Childhood*

Engaging with Gianna Russo's verse and Jenny Carey's photographs is a stirring immersion. Each diary entry possesses its own poignant beauty. All tell us something about ourselves and our relationship with the earth, its resilience and our own—and that there is something worthwhile to hold on to from hard times, just as you will want to hold onto this inspiring book.

—Jack E. Davis, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for *The Gulf: The Making of an American Sea*

Gianna Russo's dailies—haiku-like poems—mark the seasons of the plague. She deftly mines the shifting emotions, the fear, the fleeting beauty, the frustrations, and the sudden joys of each passing day. Jenny Carey's photographs tell their own story at the nexus of the manmade and natural worlds, her meanings often spelled out in the crinkled letters of fallen leaves. *All I See Is Your Glinting* is a pitch-perfect chronicle of our shared year of masks and menace, alongside the muted doings of daily life.

—Paul Wilborn, author of *Cigar City: Tales from a 1980s Creative Ghetto*

The book speaks unabashedly and refreshingly about issues of human interpersonal relationships and feelings of alienation... Both the poetry and the photography speak with an unsentimental approach to reality in both material and spiritual character. Russo and Carey touch on universal themes such as acknowledging the limits of human experience, putting into words and colors something so difficult to understand, let alone explain.

—Zora Carrier, Ph.D., Florida Museum of Photographic Arts Executive Director

These haiku-like diary entries by the poet Gianna Russo and images from nature by the photographer Jenny Carey speak to one another in an inspiring dialogue. Together, they create a dual spiritual diary that responds to our pandemic era. The poems meditate on landscape, relationships, and current events, while the photographs focus on nature's news of feathery grasses, glinting light, and rippled reflections in water.

—Lynn Saville, NYC Fine Art Photographer

## JUDGMENT DAY & OTHER WHITE LIES

BY MIKE HILBIG

ISBN: 978-1-948692-76-2 PAPERBACK 18.95

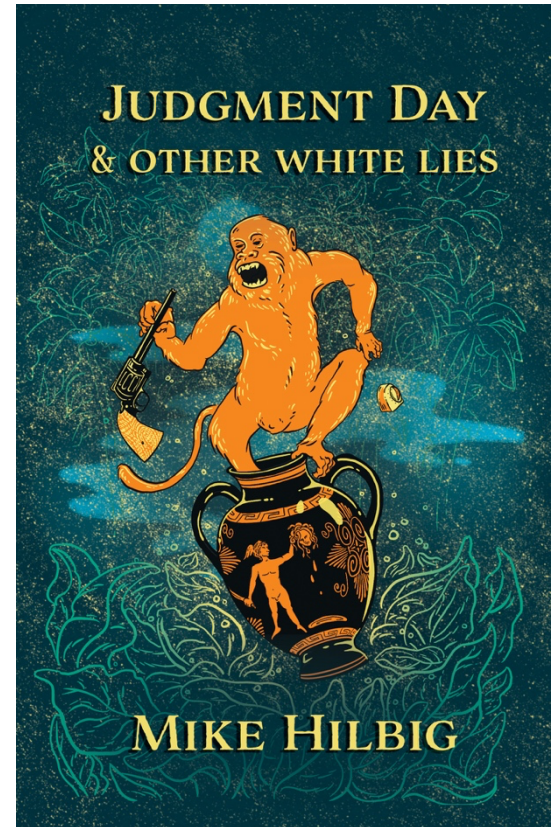
ISBN: 978-1-948692-77-9 EBOOK 9.99

5 ½ X 8 ½, 164 PP

FEBRUARY 2022

SHORT STORIES

*Judgment Day & Other White Lies* is a short fiction collection that deconstructs whiteness by retelling versions of Greek, Roman, and Christian myths, concepts, and characters through a contemporary lens that reads whiteness into history as a force of destruction for white characters (in addition to those they oppress). From an alternative biblical *Genesis* about apes having orgies while on magic mushrooms to create western civilization (as told by the kinds of philosophers who have to be stoned themselves), to a retelling of the *Oresteia* where the white heavy metal musician Orestes is helping his aging mother Dawn commit suicide, to a white graffiti writer, magician, and cultural mis-appropriator named Per-C who fundamentally alters reality by painting fantastical 'Dusa portraits all over the city of Houston to the eponymous story Judgment Day that primarily concerns the mind-altering-collapsing effects of a hallucinogenic on a Christlike white man who has two sets of memories stuck in his head, these stories show the tragicomic consequences of what happens when white people identify with the white lie of an identity that lives a fiction to maintain power.



Cover by [Crowcrumbs](#), a designer, illustrator, and artist based in Houston, Texas. She studied design and studio arts at the University of Houston.

“The stories in *Judgment Day & Other White Lies* are quintessentially Mike Hilbig, his deft artistic imagination at work (and play). The stories engage in a kind of Romantic revolution. But Hilbig’s is a post-Romantic strategy designed both to turn the natural into the supernatural and the supernatural into the natural, *and* to deconstruct, destabilize that Romantic experiment—a postmodern impulse I believe Coleridge himself would find deeply compelling... These are stories underpinned by wisdom and humor, which are simultaneously a powerful cultural critique—the call for a reckoning.”

—Robin Davidson, author of *Luminous Other* and Poet Laureate of Houston, TX from 2015-2017

**Mike Hilbig** graduated in 2017 from Sam Houston State University with an MFA in Creative Writing, Editing, and Publishing. He lives in Houston, TX and teaches English at the University of Houston-Downtown and at Lone Star College.



## THE PURSUIT: A MEDITATION ON HAPPINESS

BY GERRY LAFEMINA

ISBN: 978-1-948692-78-6 PAPERBACK 18.95

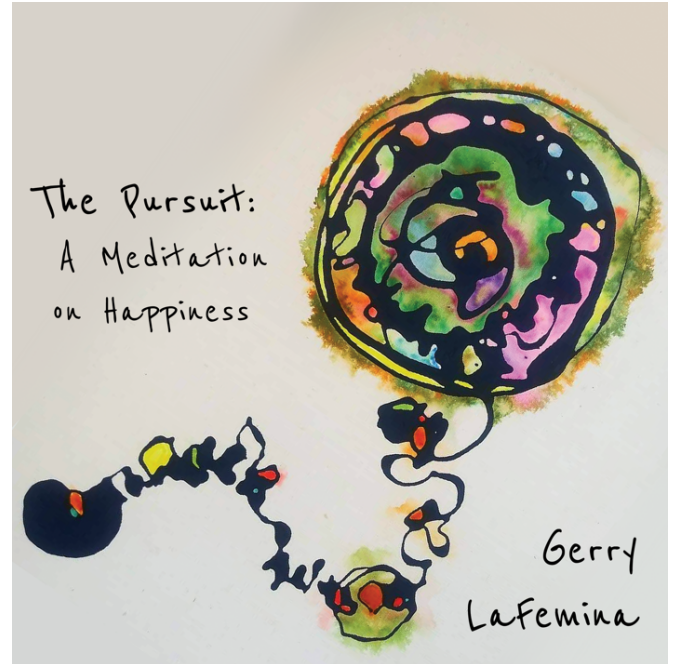
ISBN: 978-1-948692-79-3 EBOOK 9.99

8 X 8, 154 PP

FEBRUARY 2022

PERSONAL ESSAY / CREATIVE NONFICTION

It's CNF. Like the Stones' *Exile on Main Street*, it's a hodge-podge: memoir, philosophy, lit crit, pop culture, history, and reflection. Gerry calls it a medi-tation. It really is an essay in the French way of being a trial or an experiment.



Gerry LaFemina's poetry collections include *Baby Steps in Doomsday Prepping*, *The Story of Ash* and *Little Heretic*. His essays on prosody, *Palpable Magic*, came out in 2015 and Kendall Hunt recently released his textbook, *Composing Poetry: A Guide to Writing Poems and Thinking Lyrically*. He teaches at Frostburg State University and in the Carlow University MFA Program. <https://gerrylafemina.com/>

### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT GERRY LAFEMINA'S THE PURSUIT: A MEDITATION ON HAPPINESS

Among the many inspired riffs in Gerry LaFemina's freewheeling meditation on happiness, nothing impressed me more than the hard-won honesty the author brings to bear on his own foibles, wounds, privileges, and passions. Though he never explicitly says so, his book strongly implies that while honesty cannot guarantee happiness, it does make happiness possible. It has done that much and more for LaFemina.

—Garret Keizer, author of *The Unwanted Sound of Everything We Want*

I have a hard time distilling books that are wise, timely, gracefully written, richly compassionate, and honest and truthful and necessary. And yet, here I go, fumbling around trying to find the right words to entice you into opening these pages, knowing that no map is the territory, no portrait is the person. All I can tell you is Gerry LaFemina's voice is as warm and direct as soul music, and his observations about our fallen world will give you hope. Go on ahead, open the book. Here comes our morning.

—Reginald McKnight, author of *White Boys* and *He Sleeps*.

## HEARTBREAK TREE

BY PAULETTA HANSEL

ISBN: 978-1-948692-88-5 PAPERBACK \$16.95

ISBN: 978-1-948692-89-2 EBOOK \$9.99

6 X 9, 94 PP

POETRY

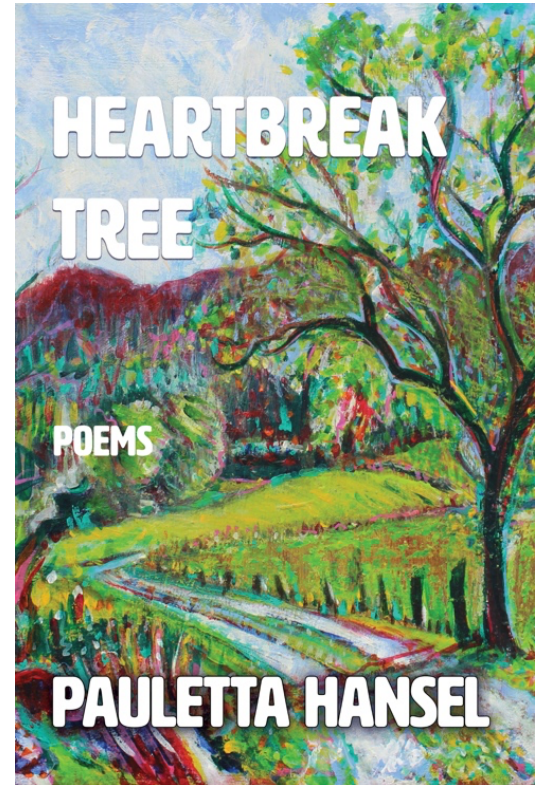
MARCH 2022

painting by Angelyn DeBord

*Heartbreak Tree* is a poetic exploration of the intersection of gender and place in Appalachia. “There is a road, but the road is still inside you,” the mature Hansel tells the girl she was, encouraging her: “You are trying. Remember.” This book does the work of that remembering, honoring the responsibility of the poet to speak the forbidden stories of her own and other women’s lives.



**Pauletta Hansel** is a poet, memoirist and teacher who is author of eight poetry collections including *Friend*, *Coal Town Photograph* and *Palindrome*, winner of the 2017 Weatherford Award for best Appalachian Poetry. Her writing has been widely anthologized and featured in print and online journals including *Oxford American*, *Rattle*, *The Writer’s Almanac*, *American Life in Poetry and Verse Daily*, *Appalachian Journal*, *Appalachian Review*, *Cincinnati Review*, and *Still: The Journal*, among others. Pauletta was Cincinnati’s first Poet Laureate, 2026-2018 and for ten years served as managing editor of *Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel*, the literary publication of Southern Appalachian Writers Cooperative.



### WHAT READERS ARE SAYING ABOUT HEARTBREAK TREE:

Women. We belong to a secret sharing, among mothers and daughters, girlfriends and sisters and lovers. We see each other across the grocery line, or in traffic, or in the salon—and we nod, knowing that we each have suffered brutalities, unnamed. We survive what others do to us, and we survive what we do to us, so often in self-violating silence, as we go on because we must—mustn’t we?—smiling, pleasing. But sometimes, rare and sure, a voice comes out of this silence, unpleased and singing; sometimes, somehow,

a woman knows how to transform this violence into medicine, enough to share. Pauletta Hansel’s *Heartbreak Tree* is just such a miracle. Every unflinching, healing poem tells the mother, daughter, girlfriend, lover who is silenced inside me to never forget: it is only the truth that sets us free.

—Rebecca Gayle Howell, Author, *American Purgatory*; United States Artists Fellow, 2019

*Heartbreak Tree* is a gorgeous book, carefully assembled from flowers, dirt, graveyards, family memories, and letters to the poet’s younger self. It’s a love story to a place and a people, an excavation, a time capsule, a fierce inquiry and a song. Read it once for the pleasure of the honest voice, read it again for the beauty of the land and lamentation at its destruction, and keep reading it because its heartbeat, however specifically regional, is the same that pulses through all of us, whispering “home, home, home.”

—Alison Luterman, *In the Time of Great Fires*, winner of the 2020 Catamaran Poetry Prize

Pauletta Hansel’s *Heartbreak Tree* is the breakout work of a lifetime, a work of breaking silences and ancestral truth telling, of weighing what poet Mary Oliver called a “box of darkness” in heart and hand like the pound of flesh it extracted—and finding it a strange gift of hard growth, harder knowledge and wisdom, and perhaps most importantly, self-forgiveness.

—Linda Parsons, author of *Candescent* and *This Shaky Earth*

Pauletta Hansel’s poems were born in the hardscrabble mountains of Kentucky. The splendor of their moments of beauty that spring up like “ironweed purpling/ the spent fields” seems earned, deserved.

—Michael Simms, author of *American Ash*, and editor of *Vox Populi*

## *MUDDY BACKROADS: STORIES FROM OFF THE BEATEN PATH*

EDITED BY LUANNE SMITH, BONNIE JO CAMPBELL, AND JODI ANGEL

ISBN: TBD PAPERBACK \$19.95

ISBN: TBD EBOOK \$9.99

6 X 9, ~300 PP

ANTHOLOGY

MARCH 2022

For this anthology, *Muddy Backroads: Stories from off the beaten path*, the editors asked for stories that moved away from the norms of daily life to explore the side roads that take us away from the known. What do your characters do when they step away from what's seen as normal or the usual? What happens when they find themselves in unexpected situations or locations? What if nothing about their lives is what most consider typical? When a character takes a "muddy backroad," he, they or she moves away from society and out into a place where anything can happen. We want to see where those backroads and back alleys take us.

NO MUD ACTUALLY REQUIRED. THE  
MUDDY BACKROAD CAN BE  
METAPHORICAL OR LITERAL

*The editors this year are Luanne Smith, Jodi Angel and Bonnie Jo Campbell. The Judge will be Alan Heathcock, author of Volt: Stories.*





## WATERMARK

BY JEFF HARDIN

ISBN: 978-1-948692-80-9 PAPERBACK \$16.95

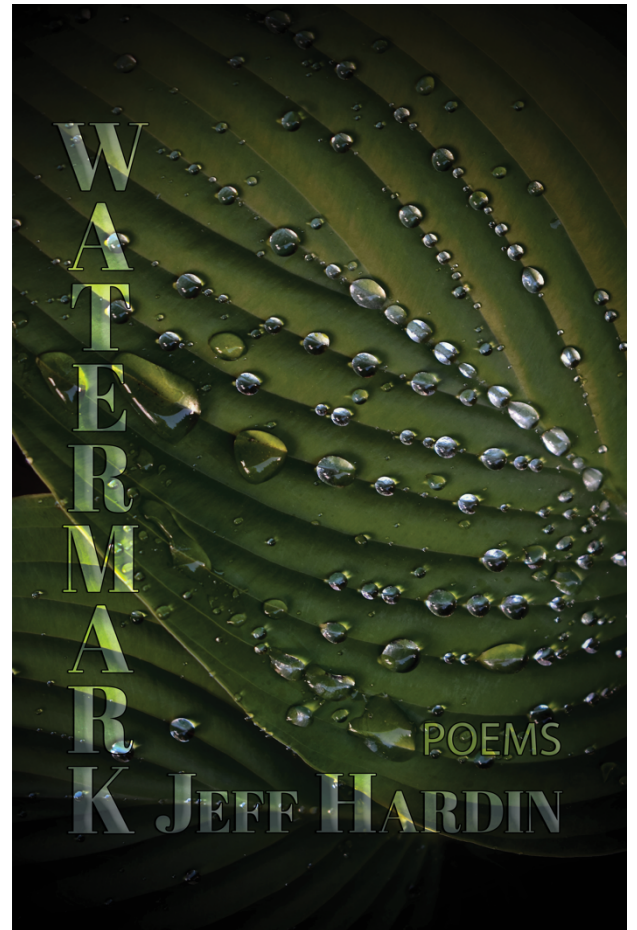
ISBN: 978-1-948692-81-6 EBOOK \$9.99

6 X 9, XX PP

POETRY

APRIL 2022

At the heart of Jeff Hardin's inventive seventh collection *Watermark*, a devotional, philosophical faith seeks "to know what can't be known," to step into, as if a sanctuary, "some deeper / deep / than what our words / can touch." In each poem, his meditations stitch back through a visible, vertical phrase—a whispered prayer, a "watermark"—that serves not only to anchor *thought* but also to align and to re-align *the purpose of thought* within "this bent and broken world." Born from Frost, Dickinson, Rilke, Whitman, and others, these phrases bind us and bless us at a time "when it seems the words / to enter others' lives / are disappearing." In an age in which it is increasingly difficult to "sort out what is true," Hardin's poems invite us to wake to the mystery all around us, to time's revelatory unfolding, and to how our minds might find healing, if not communion, if only we listened intently enough to hear "the intercessions / made on our behalf."



**Jeff Hardin** is the author of six previous collections of poetry, most recently *A Clearing Space in the Middle of Being*, *No Other Kind of World*, and *Small Revolution*. His work has been honored with the Nicholas Roerich Prize, the Donald Justice Poetry Prize, and the X. J. Kennedy Prize. Originally from Savannah, Tennessee, he has taught for almost three decades at Columbia State Community College in Columbia, Tennessee.

### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT *WATERMARK*

In *Watermark*, his seventh collection, Jeff Hardin continues his project of retrieving shreds of grace from the dusty corners of ache and want. With an attention to form as original and incisive as Mary Szybist's, and with a sense of wonder as far-reaching as Wendell Berry's, he spins out poems that have a timeless quality—like the hand stitching of a nine-patch quilt, or congregational singing from a shape-note hymnal, or the eternity-flung stanzas George Herbert left behind. Jeff Hardin's poems are vessels of wisdom and truth.

—Bobby Rogers, author of *Paper Anniversary* and *Social History*

For years, Jeff Hardin's captivating, spiritually engaged poems have revealed the resonant beauty of the natural world and celebrated the labor of metaphysical striving. *Watermark's* lyrically rewarding poems provide a "whispered prayer" that tracks Hardin's deliberations and debates with luminous companions—Yeats, Whitman, Hopkins, Dickinson, Oliver, the Four Evangelists, U2, John Mellencamp, and more. This poet's restless intellect pays tribute to "the shape of thought,/how it shimmers and stretches/and cannot lie still," examining the legacy of personal loss, family trauma, and the "murky depths" of faith. Hardin, a master craftsman, brings into view "the glimpsed-forth/shining/of one thing seen/through the presence/of another.

—Jane Satterfield, author of *Apocalypse Mix*

## THE IRON SCAR: A FATHER AND SON IN SIBERIA

BY BOB KUNZINGER

WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL KUNZINGER

ISBN: 978-1-948692-86-1 PAPERBACK \$16.95

ISBN: 978-1-948692-87-8 EBOOK \$9.99

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APRIL 2022

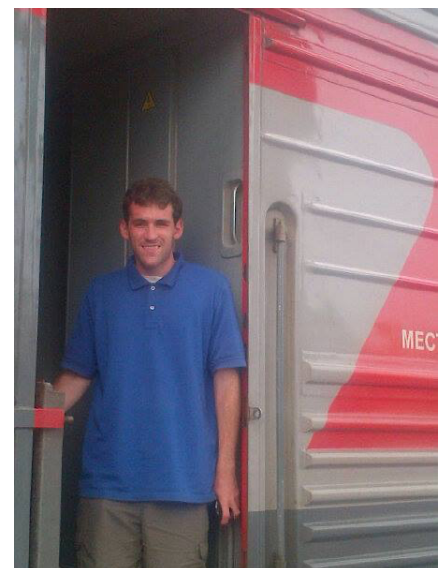
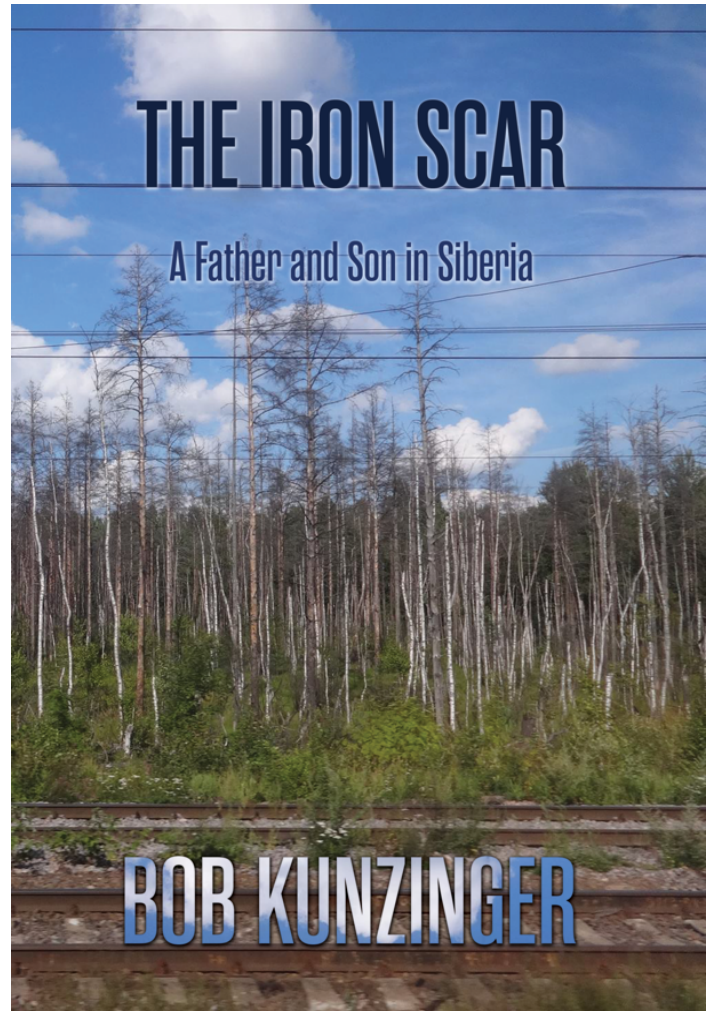
The Iron Scar is both a literal journey by a father and son on the longest railway journey in the world, and a metaphoric pilgrimage of not just the author and his adult son, but all of us learning to let go on our way through life.

**Bob Kunzinger** is the author of nine collections of essays, including: *A Third Place: Notes in Nature*, and *Penance: Walking with the Infant*. He lives in Virginia.



**Michael Kunzinger's** photography has appeared in publications such as *Kestrel*, *Blue Planet Journal*, and *St Anthony Messenger*, and has been in solo and group shows in Virginia, New York, and Galway, Ireland. His abstract work was featured for a solo exhibition at the renowned Quick Center for the Arts in New York, a finalist in an International Competition featured at The Louvre in Paris, and he is the author of the photo essay book, *Across This Wild Land: A Photographic Journey on the Trans-Siberian Railroad* from Blurb Books

[www.blurb.com/b?ebook=638486](http://www.blurb.com/b?ebook=638486).



## WORRISOME CREATURES

BY KATE SWEENEY

ISBN: 978-1-948692-82-3 PAPERBACK \$16.95

ISBN: 978-1-948692-83-0 EBOOK \$9.99

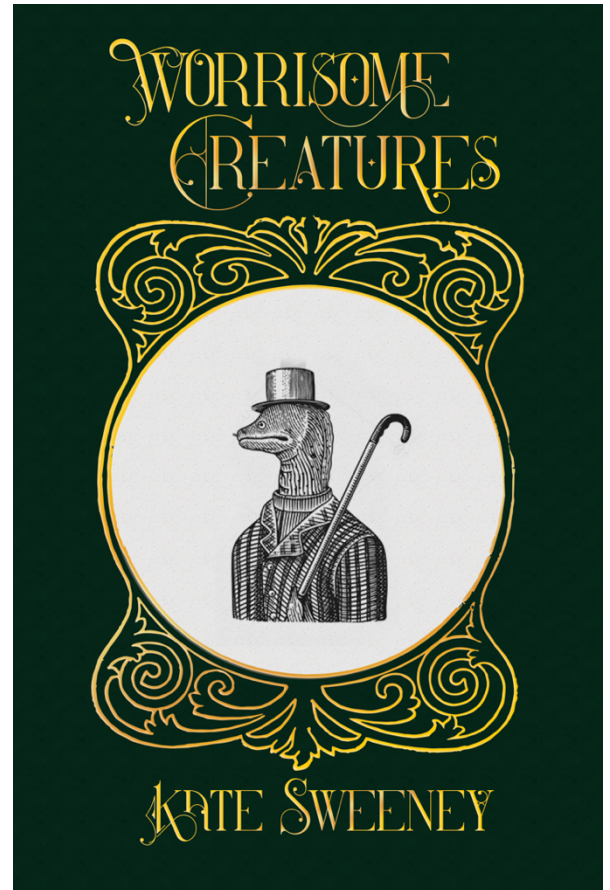
POETRY

MAY 2022

This is a collection of the body, of the failings of history and family. The range is wide and balanced—in geography, in tenderness and trauma, in startling imagery, craft, and heart. Kate Sweeney’s work takes me within and outside myself, making both realms real and seen/felt as if for the first time. In fact, much of the collection feels like entering uncharted territory—and how intriguing to explore it! Here is a master poet and, as the highest compliment, I wish I could write poems like those in *Worrisome Creatures*.

—Linda Parsons, author of *Candescent* and *This Shaky Earth*

**Kate Sweeney** Kate Sweeney is the author of the chapbook [Better Accidents](#) (Yellow Jacket Press, 2009). Her work has appeared in [Best New Poets](#), [Meridian](#), [Tampa Review](#), and [Poet Lore](#), among others.



## GENESIS ROAD

BY SUSAN O'DELL UNDERWOOD

ISBN: 978-1-948692-84-7 PAPERBACK

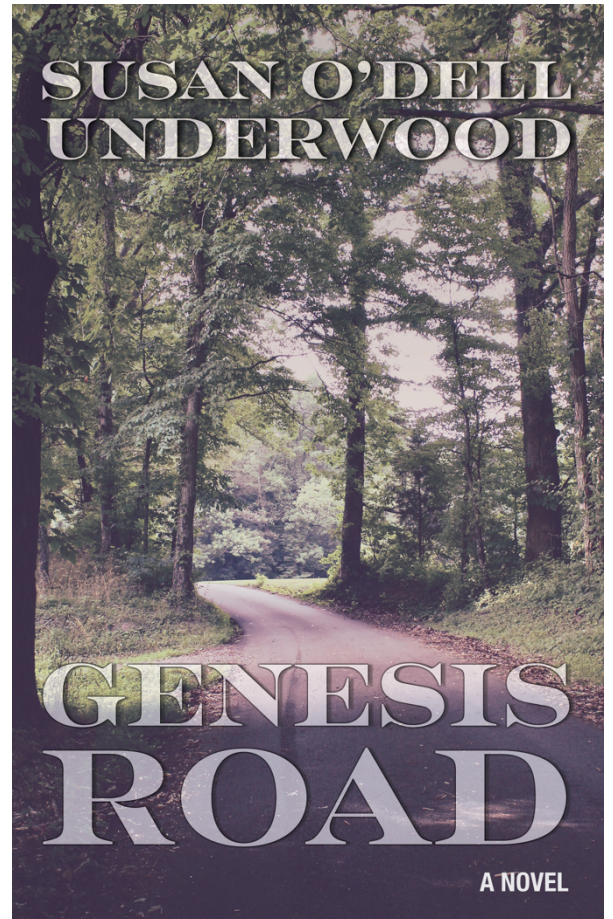
ISBN: 978-1-948692-85-4 EBOOK

FICTION

JUNE 2022

Glenna Daniels faces a midlife cul-de-sac. She bears a recent miscarriage and third divorce the way her Appalachian parents taught her to cope with tragedy—in stoic secrecy. She quits her social work position in Knoxville and runs away from home at the age of thirty-six, heading west with childhood friend, Carey, a gay professor in Atlanta. During their years in school, Glenna protected him from bullies. Now Carey is her savvy guide as she tries to heal her fractured life. Through the wilds of America Glenna grapples with the past and reconciles a way back home.

**Susan O'Dell Underwood** grew up in Bristol, Tennessee, the daughter and granddaughter of public school teachers who also farmed. She earned an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and holds a PhD in English from Florida State University. She directs the creative writing program at Carson-Newman University, where her husband, artist David Underwood, also teaches. Besides two chapbooks, she has one full-length collection of poetry, *The Book of Awe* (Iris Press), and her poems, nonfiction, and stories are published in many journals and anthologies, including *Oxford American*, *Ecotone*, *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Still: The Journal*, and *A Literary Field Guide to Southern Appalachia*.



## PROVENANCE: A NOVEL

BY SUE MELL

WINNER OF THE MADVILLE BLUE MOON NOVEL COMPETITION

COMING JULY 2022

In upstate New York, an adult brother and sister navigate a tricky relationship that tests the limits of family interdependence, exemplifying what the writer Alfred Hayes said, that what one ran out of was not mistakes, but the years to make them in. A story of what might still be possible, even when our best efforts fall short, *Provenance* taps into the characters' reserves of motivation and strength, in service of what all of us want: another chance.

### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT *PROVENANCE*:

The story is compelling, and the relationships that are explored here are a study in the dynamics of family and social expectation. It reminded me in ways of novels such as *The Shipping News*, and others of like categories, studies in mood and situation and character. More to the point, it's just plain beautifully written. The prose is gentle, swaying, warm, and inviting. It's a good read, and it stays with the reader afterwards in a very pleasant if somewhat bittersweet way.

—Clay Reynolds, <https://clayreynoldstx.com/>, Blue Moon Novel Competition judge, and author of *The Vigil*, *Agatite*, *Franklin's Crossing*, *Ars Poetica*, *Monuments*, and *The Tentmaker*.

"*Provenance* is a beautifully supple book about the power of renewal and the everyday, small redemptions hiding within families. Sue Mell artfully captures the hold of the past in all its intoxicating, tumbledown glory and sings it to life in the present."

—Dominic Smith, author of *The Last Painting of Sara de Vos*

"Widowed DJ leaves Park Slope to move in with his younger sister and her 11-year-old daughter in upstate New York, leaving behind a lifetime's collection of musical instruments, memorabilia, and flea market treasures. Unmoored without the security of his stuff, DJ is finally able to face his own grief and become able to truly love, for perhaps the first time in his life. Sue Mell's searingly beautiful prose and her truly troubled, truly decent characters make *Provenance* a gorgeous, unforgettable novel about learning how to value what is most important in life: those we love and those who show us how to be better."

—Susan Scarf Merrell, author of *Shirley: A Novel*

"Sue Mell's *Provenance* is a story of resiliency. Her characters are as challenged and as flawed as the rest of us, but through the small things they do for each other and the small gifts they give each other, they find their way forward. Ultimately, this is a book about kindness, compassion, and sacrifice—old-fashioned virtues that, Mell shows us, still hold their value."

—Peter Turchi, author of *Maps of the Imagination*



"In Sue Mell's *Provenance*, an adult brother and sister navigate a tricky relationship that tests the limits of interdependence. They exemplify what Alfred Hayes said, that what one ran out of was not mistakes, but the years to make them in. This novel taps into the characters' reserves of motivation and strength in service of what we all want: another chance, and what might still be possible when our best efforts fall short."

—Amy Hempel, award-winning author of *Sing to It* and *The Collected Stories of Amy Hempel*

**Sue Mell is a writer from Queens, NY. She earned her MFA from Warren Wilson College and was a 2020 BookEnds fellow at SUNY Stony Brook Southampton. Her collection of micro essays, *Giving Care*, was a semi-finalist for the Digging Press 2020 Chapbook Prize. Other work has appeared in *Brilliant Flash Fiction*, *Cleaver Magazine*, *Digging Through The Fat*, *Jellyfish Review*, *Narrative Magazine*, *Newtown Literary*, *The Journal of Compressed Creative Arts*, and *Whale Road Review*. Find her at [suemellwrites.com](http://suemellwrites.com) and on Twitter @suemell2017**

## SECRET CITY

BY KATHERINE SMITH

ISBN: 978-1-948692-90-8 PAPERBACK \$16.95

ISBN: 978-1-948692-91-5 EBOOK \$9.99

POETRY

AUGUST 2022

Secret City explores belonging and power through the eyes of children and adults, whether the relationships in question are to a family, to a religion, to a region or to a country. The imagery of the natural world weaves in and out of the dreams of a young Jewish girl brought to live with a Christian family in Oak Ridge, Tennessee during World War II. A woman with a childhood of being bullied moves north only to find herself an authority figure, teaching students who are themselves outsiders marked for deportation. In the midst of confusion and ideology, where victim and perpetrator ceaselessly exchange roles, the voices in these poems search for a ground of belonging in the natural world, in serving others, and in the intimately textured language of poetry.



**Katherine Smith's** poetry publications include appearances in *Boulevard*, *North American Review*, *Cincinnati Review*, *Missouri Review*, *Ploughshares*, *Southern Review*, and many other journals. Her first book *Argument by Design* (Washington Writers' Publishing House) appeared in 2003. Her second book of poems, *Woman Alone on the Mountain* (Iris Press), appeared in 2014. She works at Montgomery College in Maryland.

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### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT SECRET CITY:

I have long admired Katherine's finely tuned, lush work and her discipline as a writer. Her vision continues to expand and deepen in this third collection, *Secret City*. Persecution, war, and its haunting aftermath come in various forms. But redemption is nigh in this work, the prayer of embrace and belonging answered by red sumac, willow, camellia, chestnut pony. The speakers are indeed born again: "I'm going live twice, / once baptized in the Clinch River, // once with the wild geese that fly over Norris Dam / towards the Cumberland Plateau and never look down."

—Linda Parsons, author of *Candescent* and *This Shaky Earth*

## *BICYCLES OF THE GODS*

BY MICHAEL SIMMS

MAD FANTASY - FICTION

AUGUST 2022

In *Bicycles of the Gods*, the main character, Jesse, presents an earthly incarnation of Jesus Christ come to earth in the body of a 12-year-old boy in the company of Xavi, who is the earthly incarnation of Shiva, Destroyer of Worlds, also a 12-year-old boy. The pair stand on a hilltop above the city of Los Angeles contemplating how best to destroy it as a precursor to destroying the entire world to rid it of humanity so it can refresh and rebuild. Xavi is ready to get on with the task The Big Guy, God, has assigned them, but Jesse has a problem. He isn't sure that *everyone* deserves to be destroyed.

### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT *Bicycles of the Gods*

A playful, provocative, and imaginative discursus, *Bicycles of the Gods* is an affront to racism, sexism, classism, ageism, and heterosexism as it posits a Divine who will not be captured and used by white supremacists for their own purposes. Michael Simms has created an engaging new world order that functions within our familiar one.

—Rev. Dr. Moni McIntyre, author of *Social Ethics and the Return to Cosmology*

Whether Michael Simms is writing a personal essay about growing up with autism or poems about our dying planet, a barfight, or the mystery of a hummingbird's radiance, he is a master storyteller whose narratives hold memorable moments full of fresh and telling details that unlock the heart. And now, in *Bicycles of the Gods* he has invented a new genre—*apocalyptic satire*. The novel is hilarious at times, but make no mistake, Simms is serious as a heart attack in a hurricane. It tells an old story in a completely new way, exploring issues of faith, politics, trauma, imagination, and the triumph of love over tyranny.

—Peter Makuck, author of *Wins and Losses: Stories*

Set in today's digital-age Los Angeles, with a delightful cast of characters, including celestial ones "in disguise to make it easier to move through the world," you will encounter The Big Guy, Maria, Jesse, Xavi, Luke, and Abe, as well as Christine, Mikey, Patrick, the Six Sisters of the Piston, Father Jack, Stefan the Poet, Birdie, Dharma the Dog, and Caruso the Parrot, all of whom are caught up in the tragic-comic battle between the forces of Good and Evil, Light and Darkness. Michael Simms has given us a frolicking and "novel" approach to the Apocalypse of John that offers a front-row seat to the shenanigans of the times in which we are presently living.

*Bicycles of the Gods* deserves its own Broadway billing as both "Dantean" and "Shakespearean."

—Rev. Dr. Charles Davidson, author of *Bone Dead and Rising: Vincent van Gogh and the Self Before God*



*Michael Simms is an accomplished poet, writer, editor, publisher, teacher, blogger and entrepreneur. Seven collections of his poetry, three novels, and two widely adopted poetry textbooks have been published or are under contract with publishers. He has also been the lead editor of over 100 published books, including the bestselling Autumn House Anthology of Poetry, now in its third edition. Simms has taught at a number of universities, including Chatham University's MFA program from 2005-2013.*

## WINNER OF THE ARTHUR SMITH POETRY PRIZE

SEPTEMBER 2022

JUDGED BY JESSE GRAVES

The winning poet receives a \$1,000 advance, a standard royalty contract, and 20 copies of the published book. Finalists will also be considered for future publication.

There are no restrictions on the type of poetry we will consider.

Extended submission period to September 30, 2021.

CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT:

[HTTPS://MADVILLE.SUBMITTABLE.COM/SUBMIT](https://madville.submittable.com/submit)

ARTHUR SMITH was born in central California. He received degrees from San Francisco State University (B.A., M.A.) and from the University of Houston (Ph.D.). He passed away on November 9th, 2018. To those who knew and loved him, he was a master teacher and a masterful poet. His first book of poems, *Elegy on Independence Day*, was awarded the Agnes Lynch Starrett Poetry Prize and was published by the University of Pittsburgh Press in 1985. That same year, it was selected by the Poetry Society of American to receive the Norma Farber First Book Award. His second book of poems, *Orders of Affection*, was published by Carnegie Mellon University Press in 1996, and his third book, *The Late World*, was published in 2002, also by Carnegie Mellon University Press. His most recent book of poems is *The Fortunate Era* (2013). His work has been honored with a "Discovery"/The Nation Award, a National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship, two Pushcart Prizes, and he was selected as the Theodore Morrison Fellow in Poetry for the 1987 Bread Loaf Writer's Conference. He served two terms as an advisory member of the Tennessee Arts Commission Literary Panel, and he was a Professor of English at the University of Tennessee. His poems have appeared in numerous journals including *The Nation*, *The New Yorker*, *Poetry*, *The Southern Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, and *North American Review*.

—Curt Rode



Jesse Graves is the author of four poetry collections, including *Tennessee Landscape with Blighted Pine*, *Basin Ghosts*, *Specter Mountain* (co-authored with William Wright), and *Merciful Days*. His work has received the James Still Award for Writing about the Appalachian South from the Fellowship of Southern Writers and the Philip H. Freund Prize for Creative Writing from Cornell University, as well as two Weatherford Awards from Berea College and the Appalachian Studies Association. Graves has been an editor on several collections of poetry and scholarship, including three volumes of *The Southern Poetry Anthology* and *The Complete Poems of James Agee*. He teaches at East Tennessee State University, where he is Poet-in-Residence and Professor of English.

### MORE INFO:

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## GRAVITY HILL

BY SUSANNE DAVIS

COMING OCTOBER 2022

RUNNER UP IN THE MADVILLE BLUE MOON NOVEL COMPETITION JUDGED BY CLAY REYNOLDS

*Gravity Hill* is a story about Jordan Hawkins, her family, and a small rural town in Connecticut wrecked by the tragic death of three boys in what appears to be a drunk driving accident on Gravity Hill. But something about the accident doesn't seem right to Jordan and when people vilify her brother, who was driving, she tries to clear his name, uncovering a physical and emotional toxic dump and decades of secrets and lies that need to be forgiven in order to get through grief to healing for the people and place of Gravity Hill.

SUSANNE DAVIS is the daughter of a sixth-generation dairy farmer and lives near her dad's farm where the real Gravity Hill exists. Her dad works every day to keep his farm from developers, just like Jordan's father. She has an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop and a short story collection, *The Appointed Hour* (Cornerstone Press). Individual stories have been published in *American Short Fiction*, *Notre Dame Review*, *Clackamas Literary Review*, and other literary journals. Her work has won awards and recognition, including 2<sup>nd</sup> place Blue Moon Novel Competition and mention as distinguished story in Best American Short Stories series. She teaches at Hope College.



### WHAT READERS ARE SAYING ABOUT *GRAVITY HILL*:

Susanne Davis's *Gravity Hill* delivers the goods: hers is a heartfelt story of loss and renewal, populated with characters who are flawed, feisty, and entirely sympathetic. At the heart of this story is Jordan Hawkins, an irrepressible young woman whose grief over her brother's death triggers the risky behavior and impetuous decision-making that will send her down roads she had not meant to travel. Davis has a gift for dialogue and vivid description; her details about agricultural life, the family dynamic, and the rules of the road are evocative and precise. It's both a pleasure and an honor for me to endorse *Gravity Hill*, a story to which readers will be drawn and by which they'll be rewarded.

—Wally Lamb, *New York Times* bestselling author of *We are Water* and *She's Come Undone*

Susanne Davis is an extraordinary writer. She creates characters that you instantly care about, that you worry over, that you live with. She writes about situations and lives that, like John Irving, are not only fiercely entertaining, but they also have a deep moral center about how we should be living our lives, what we should care about, how we can manage our rich and complicated world. A diamond talent.

—Caroline Leavitt, *New York Times* bestselling author of both *Is This Tomorrow* and *Pictures of You*

In *Gravity Hill*, Susanne Davis has tackled the wide, sweeping themes of love and loss, environmental troubles, feuds, families forced to confront each other's mistakes, communities coming apart and then coming together, regrets, fathers and sons, and families torn up by old lies and secrets. This story, told with gentle but vivid writing, brings us to painful tears of recognition about the human condition and yet uplifts us with the redemptive quality of hope.

—Maddie Dawson, author of *The Stuff That Never Happened*

## THE CYCLONE RELEASE

BY BRUCE OVERBY

COMING NOVEMBER 2022

RUNNER-UP IN MADVILLE'S 2021 BLUE MOON NOVEL COMPETITION

It's the late 90s Internet boom, and Brendon Meagher has just lost his wife Sadie in a freakish car accident at the edge of Silicon Valley. *The Cyclone Release* follows Brendon as he emerges from tragedy and lands in a pre-IPO start-up that promises astonishing riches. Mo Gramercy, a bright and commanding colleague with her own deep secret, joins Brendon, disrupts his malaise, and takes him as her lover. The characters' career toward IPO millions, their secrets suddenly converging, and both are shaken without mercy from bucolic notions of work, life, and impending fortune.



Born in California's Santa Clara Valley long before it became the Silicon Valley of today, **BRUCE OVERBY** both participated in and keenly observed the transformation and evolution of an insular place that many still fail to understand. His fiction has appeared in several literary journals, and his story "Bookmarks" won First Prize in the Lorian Hemingway Short Story Competition. He holds an MFA in Writing from Queens University of Charlotte and continues to live in Northern California with his wife Caroline. *The Cyclone Release*, a finalist in the Madville Publishing Blue Moon Novel Competition, is his first novel.

### WHAT READERS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE CYCLONE RELEASE:

Masterful, provocative, and compulsively readable, *The Cyclone Release* speaks to the unpredictability of love and loss and the seemingly heartless way life changes on a dime, while offering readers an intimate view into the bizarre landscape of the Silicon Valley tech start-up. An impressive debut.

— Danielle Girard, USA Today and Amazon #1 Bestselling Author of *Far Gone*

In a cautionary tale of Silicon Valley, Brendon Meagher is a modern-day Tommy Wilhelm for fans of Saul Bellow's *Seize the Day*. — Overby delivers a poignant look over the cubicle walls of a high-tech start-up and into the lives of hard-charging acolytes. Filled with love and loss, and propelled by the looming promise of financial windfall, this debut is not to be missed!

— Jeffery Hess, author of *No Salvation* and the *Beachhead* trilogy

## THE GATE IN THE GARDEN WALL

BY SAM PICKERING

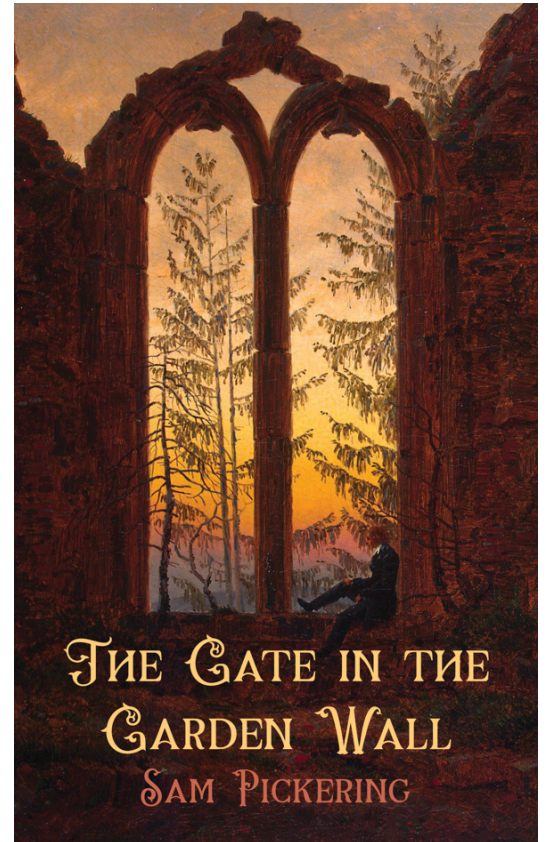
ESSAYS

DECEMBER 2022

Last year Sam Pickering announced that he'd written his final word. "I intend to sit in a chair at the edge of the driveway and on sunny days doze through hours waking up occasionally to identify birds on the feeder. My hands and lap will be empty, and I won't worry about a wind scattering papers across the yard." Three days later Mike a college classmate wrote him. "Given all the books you have written, it makes me sad to hear that you have written your last book. Please remember what mighty things 80-year-olds can do. For instance, Goethe taught himself Greek when he was 80. Too bad he died at 81."

"I'm trapped," Pickering said and picked up his pencil. "Words are me." Sam Pickering has written more than thirty books and barrows of articles. When not at his desk, he was in the classroom, the last thirty-five teaching English at the University of Connecticut. Originally from Nashville, he did not plan to teach, or write. "But," he says, "the good life knocks a person about and takes him here and there"—in Pickering's case to years meandering the Mid-East, Eastern and Western Europe, to Australia, and Nova Scotia, to places great and small. He says he loved teaching, the secret to which was "liking people." His pages reflect his enjoyment of and love of life, particularly the ordinary things that form the fabric "of all our lives."

He is a member of the Fellowship of Southern Writers and is at work on another book, about which he says two things, "alas" and "hurrah."



*Vicki Pickering holding Little Sammy Pickering, Big Sammy looking on beside the Reedy River in Greenville, South Carolina. (Photo by Edward Pickering)*