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An expanded version of Ring of Fire, originally published by Zoland Books, Boston, 2001. This full-length collection includes individual lyric poems as well as a previously published chapbook Sea Lyrics and a new collaborative piece "Dumb Duke Death" with illustrations by Jennifer Jarnot.

Ring of Fire Details

Date : Published September 23rd 2003 by Salt Publishing (first published February 5th 2001)

ISBN : 9781844710072

Author : Lisa Jarnot

Format : Paperback 97 pages

Genre : Poetry, Literary Fiction

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Jade says

Lovely collection. I first discovered this book a few years ago and did not like it because I felt it was too random. But now I can appreciate the poet's style and it is one of my favorites. Each line contains a surprise, yet each poem as a whole evoke a sense of sadness and deep emotion. They are poems you can feel and they go beyond literal understanding. Not just a bunch of odd phrases thrown together, they work like a mosaic. The seemingly separate parts come together in an exciting, yet comprehensible way. Great repetitions as well. Highlights include: The Bridge, Brooklyn Anchorage, the Sea Lyrics section, and the poetic interpretation of the Eightfold Path.

MKMKMK says

I just posted the below note on Black Dog Songs, but it was really about both so I'm pasting it below:

I think this and Ring of Fire made me wake up to contemporary poetry. Prior to these I had no idea there was poetry being written right now that was doing anything worth paying attention to. Glad I was wrong. Sort of embarrassed to say it was so recent that I discovered these nice absurd explorations.

Geoffrey says

I love this book! Simply stunning moving language.

Logan says

Another book I'll never get over. This book got my engines goin' and my sails pointed in the right direction. Word-play AND emotion in modern/ post-avant/ post-language/ post-post-modern / whatever poetry. It CAN happen. It's called HAVING A SOUL. Jarnot's got one. Do you?

Anna says

If you want to know what repetition can do, read this book. Ring of Fire seems the most rigorous example of Jarnot's style. She's always playful, but there's more than that here. "Sea Lyrics" is a great series/long poem. It will make you run to the nearest tattoo shop and do something the House Unamerican Activities Committee would disapprove of.

Joe says

This book was recommended to me as a study in repetition, so let's start there. It works several ways here. First, a great number of the poems (and all of those in Sea Lyrics) are sort of one sentence blasts which are composed of long paratactic strings of phrases: I am_____, I am_____, I am_____. Within these paratactic strings are repetitions of key images or phrases—"I am the waterfront and I cover the waterfront." And often crucial images or phrases are repeated not only within one poem, but from poem to poem. These images often find themselves in increasingly strange or amusing contexts. The effect is one which often frustrates traditional sense making, as the sentences can simply just fold back up on themselves, return from where they came. And while this would seem to invite the reader to linger on the images longer than they would if they were a part of same larger, easily recognizable unit of sense, the lines are often enjambed, forcing the reader forward. The result is, at best, a rapid succession of happy transformations or departures and returns from certain phrases. At worst, the poems just seem sloppy, overfull, moving too fast, having meaning only through their own insistent motion. Though because there is a sort of improvisational element to writing in a listing method, one is willing to give lesser poems the benefit of the doubt. And poems such as "I am holding the guns in the attics..." & "O Razorback Clams" are definitely successful.

"Sea Lyrics" is especially challenging in that there are no variations in the form, just one dense block of stuff after another. In the end, because Jarnot only demonstrates hints at formal versatility and her chosen form in this book being so rigid (many of the poems in other sections being written via the "Sea Lyrics" method), this book feels around 4-6 poems too long. It risks alienating the reader without a tremendous amount of patience.

Bette Noir says

Type of pony: one trick.

Oliver Ho says

This is another collection worth re-reading several times over. The poems are hypnotic in their use of repeated images and words, circular and dreamlike in construction. There's a religious, ecstatic feel to many of the poems, celebrating life and creatures of all sorts, while balancing a meditative aspect about them. It's as if the poet is trying to be as clear and detailed as possible about a particular moment, but then something mysterious keeps her thoughts swirling around and back on itself.

cristiana says

"the bridge," the opening poem to the collection, is one of my favorite poems. the collection, as a whole, should be read by every poet who cringes at the idea of writing "i" poems, but still wants his/her audience to understand some sort of emotive thread.

C.S. Carrier says

One of the most amazing and infectious books ever.

Wendy says

great great stuff

monica says

Solid.
