



For

Carol Snow

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When Carol Snow published her first volume of poetry, *Artist and Model*, in 1989, poet Michael Palmer praised the "complex music [Snow] forms from our simplest words" and noted that she "reflects on the struggle toward--and limits of--representation itself. . . . *Artist and Model* is a first book of singular poetic intelligence and attention."

In *For*, the first volume in the New California Poetry series, Snow continues her vast and original poetic project of defining the relationship among art, life, and the acts of perception that define and limit those terms. If there is "subject matter" --an elusive term when one is talking about Snow's writing--it is the play between memory and moment.

Here is work that makes innovative use of autobiographical material, in finely wrought and highly sculpted poetry of great integrity, power, and subtlety. The kinship *For* has with Eastern thought and poetic forms extends to the fact that, like the poetry of Tu Fu, it has a depth charge of spare style. Among American writers, Snow's antecedents include Elizabeth Bishop and George Oppen.

For synthesizes something classical and ancient--the need to observe cleanly and to represent a thing simply and with force. Snow forges new and remarkable poetry by combining traditions that once seemed incompatible--the materials of life and a purely aesthetic, experimental style.

For Details

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From Reader Review For for online ebook

Paula Koneazny says

Snow is a poet of attention and silence. To read her is to unbusy the mind. In these poems, her emphasis on breath is almost yogic. Breath becomes the “tether,” a word that recurs and which is the title of one of the poems. We are tethered to perception by the breath. Breath also occurs as “tidal—ardor . . . fervor . . . horror . . . as moon—”. Hanging out laundry, visiting a memory-less musician father: the poems deal in primal elements as if witnessing the birth of the universe when “the silence was huge.” There are lovely lines throughout, such as “you were held//so still, you thought that you might become those hills,/or must have been borne by hills,// or maybe your body/ had been a maquette for the hills.” The title of the collection, “For,” reappears in the poem “Mask Series” as “where the eyes were looking was for.” Looking here is related to creation of/by/in the universe and creation of/ by/ in art. The poems are painterly in their attentions. Visual art and the art of the visual become touchstones as well as formal guides or guides to form. Snow’s reconstruction of perception seems both cubist and organic, resembling the bivalves she pries loose from a dock in “Bowl.” In “Position Paper” she says “I found I could position my gaze,” a statement which succinctly sums up this poet’s approach to both the world and the page. Hers is a world in which the most damning epithet might well be “Miss Absenting Herself, Miss Attention Elsewhere.”

Todd says

elegantly paced in the quiet of what is being lost and found / found and lost. perfectly read on a saturday where the clouds never seem to lift... but the light always there...
