



What Is Amazing

Heather Christle

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Inspired by a voracious curiosity about humans and other subjects, the poems in Heather Christle's *What Is Amazing* describe and invent worlds in an attempt to understand through participation. The book draws upon the wisdom of foolishness and the logic of glee, while simultaneously exploring the suffering inherent to embodied consciousness. Speakers play out moments of bravado and fear, love and mortality, disappointment and desire. They socialize incorrigibly with lakes, lovers, fire, and readers, reasoning their way to unreasonable conclusions. These poems try to understand how it is that we come to recognize and differentiate objects and beings, how wholly each is attached to its name, and which space reveals them. *What Is Amazing* delights in fully inhabiting its varied forms and voices, singing worlds that often coincide with our own.

What Is Amazing Details

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Author : Heather Christle

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From Reader Review What Is Amazing for online ebook

Maura Cuneo says

This is BY FAR my LEAST FAVORITE book EVER.

Martyn says

Even though the title of this collection isn't really a question the answer, if it were one, would be "this book".

There is some jaw dropping language, and brain plumbing metaphors that defy description; I think stunning is too ordinary a word for what's going on here. Heather Christle's poetry is moving and affecting and, once you realize just how she is presenting her unique view of the world, really quite enlightening.

Bert says

the liner notes on this book say that this book 'draws upon the wisdom of foolishness and the logic of glee' - i don't know what that means, and i don't really like the sound of it, but i do really like Heather Christle and her poems. What i like about them is that they seem to begin in confusion and then make sense of themselves. You kind of willingly follow them blindly and them stumble on some unexpected piece of light. In this collection she uses the words Cloud and Hole a lot, and she is interested in how words like Real and Ordinary work in a sentence 'the sky exposes one/ or two real eagles', which i like. There are a few poems here which I thought were maybe just good ideas, but then you come across lines like this; 'I love you whenever a truck crashes/ into the low bridge downtown/ and I come to you when trees/ have the sense they've just landed' which is lovely.

Jeff says

Didn't enjoy it too much until I heard her read. That made the book for me

Kate Wyer says

I READ THIS COLLECTION TWO TIMES THROUGH. Oh, caps lock was on. The excitement of the capitals fits though.

But the book is actually quiet. Even with its exclamation points and slyness.

I admire how she is so purposefully playing with what a poem is on the page. There are no periods in the first section. Periods appear in the last poem in the second section. The third has more standarized punctuation and pretty damn perfect couplets. The key is that it all feels on purpose.

I WILL KNOW YOU BY YOUR RED CARNATION is my favorite, but there are also quite a few others. TO KEW BY TRAM for example.

When her poems open at their ends, rather than close with an abstraction or with something from left field, they really give you that *feeling*, that mixture of joy and despair. I felt more of the third section poems were open in this way.

Jay says

dreamy, cutely violent and sad

Samantha says

Despite having read two of her books, I haven't quite jumped on the Heather Christie bandwagon. As others have said, there are some brilliant lines and inspiring questions and ideas in many of these poems, but as whole pieces, they mostly feel incomplete, to me, tip-of-the-iceberg thoughts that don't follow through. I'd read a few lines that were really thought-provoking, but then the poem jumped to something else and I was left wanting a bit more from the first idea. Would love to have seen some of these expanded, which may have led to a better understanding of some of the images that seemed otherwise randomly thrown in.

Eric T. Voigt says

Bummed it's all over. Loads of lines end up to be punch-lines. The moving poems are unexpected. There are twists. Wacky then wise. Favorite chunk: "And I hope I do not drown/as I have seen happen/to hundreds of spiders/b/c I love to swim/and to drown would/wreck swimming/for a long time."

Eric Cartier says

I didn't enjoy this collection as much as Christle's previous two. There are bright lines that leap off the page, but not as many poems that shimmer in their entirety.

* * * * *

to finish at last the portrait of the cloud

and to look up and discover
now the subject has moved on

Kathleen says

<http://coldfrontmag.com/reviews/what-...>

Stella says

I'm actually a little hesitant to rate this book at all - because it's not that I thought this was bad poetry, I just definitely don't think it's my kind of poetry. I found part i incredibly difficult to get through, the style not particularly enjoyable - although I loved many of the titles, they seemed like poems in and of themselves, without any need for the following blocks of text. Parts ii and iii seemed to have more to say to me (although less exciting titles), and while there were a couple of poems I almost could have liked (and I really did enjoy the final poem), for the most part this just wasn't my book of poetry.

eli? says

This book was my introduction to poetry, and I learned to see poetry through a different light thanks to my English teacher Mr. Henn.

cori says

"the spider" (34) -
"the spider he is confused
b/c i am not killing him
only moving him outdoors
when i die i do not want
to feel confused
no i would rather feel clarity
like i am a pool
and death a chlorine tablet
i want it to feel
not like i am dying
but am being transferred
to the outside
and i hope i do not drown
as i have seen happen
to hundreds of spiders
b/c i love to swim
and to drown would
wreck swimming
for a long time
but death is like none of this
i know that death is a tower
standing in the middle of the town

and the tower receives
many visits
and there's no one
but spiders inside"

Jamie Gaughran-Perez says

Once upon a time I would have read this cover to cover in one sitting, and am glad I didn't. But Part 1 / The Seaside! is a good single-sitting read. The second and third parts felt like they had a more New Yorker cadence to them than other work, I've read, but I can roll with that and liked what was going on. "Angry Fawn" is just great. Many poems in here are just great. Make sure you see her at a reading -- that's great, too. Grab the book. Enjoy.

Cheryl says

SELF-PORTRAIT WITH FIRE

They asked me if I was on fire and I said No no no no
no no no I did not want to make trouble I was lying I was
on fire on my legs and on my hands I was ashamed I tried
to hide my legs by kneeling I set the grass on fire...

IF YOU GO INTO THE WOODS YOU WILL FIND IT HAS A TECHNOLOGY

This tree has a small LED display
It is glowing and it can show you words
and it can show you pictures and it can melt
from one choice to another and you are looking at it
and it wants you to share the message
but it can't see that you are the only one around
and that everyone else is hibernating
which you love You are so happy and alone
with the red and yellow lights It's a nice day
to be in nature and to read up on the very bland ideas
this tree has about how to live This tree says
grow stronger and this tree says fireworks effect
This tree is the saddest prophet in history
but you don't tell it that You are trying to show it respect
which gets tiresome but then it flashes
a snake at you It's a kind of LED tree hybrid joke
and you could just kiss it for trying For failing
But it can't see you and it starts to cry

TO KEW BY TRAM

Lying down among the daffodils I am composed
but not the daffodils because I crushed them! Not
as an act in itself It was auxiliary Were my next
attempt to stand myself erect upon my feet
I would leave behind devastation
in the organized shape of my body
This is also how I move myself through
space Everywhere these holes I don't look
back to When I return as a giraffe the holes
will have to change They will say no god
would plan on such a shape And if then
I lie down again on these yellow flowers they
will teach me that goldleness is dim

Unique and thought provoking. The titles sometimes had nothing to do with the poems at first glance, what does an English tram to Kew have to do with crushing daffodils? But there was a rhythm that made sense later as you read more and read them again. I liked the structure of the poems, they did seem to open with something ethereal, abstract, and end with pessimistic views of what we can learn from the world instead of the "logic of foolishness and wisdom of glee" they are purported to contain. I think trees and daffodils have more than bland and dim wisdom to impart, but I am a nature ecstatic and am drawn to that kind of poetry. Mark Doty, a poet I admire, wrote that she is a voice of the early 21st century and I cringe at that because if so, it is a focus on the negative only, and there is so much more that needs to be said. For example, GO AND PLAY OUTSIDE is a great title for a poem, but talks about how "...what loops the world gives us gives us EAGLES! and ugliness it gives us too. what gives us away is not the world, is its disappearance, how still we breathe out as if we could hide." There is so much more beauty in the world, and I wish she would take her intricate and unique wordplay and show us that. I think it would be stunning.
