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Sixteen Rivers Press

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For Immediate Release

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Master of Leaves

by Murray Silverstein

“I love the wit and play of Murray Silverstein’s writing—offhand, riffing with himself and the reader—in poems like the sequence ‘What Is Man?’ in which a dog, Saul (named after Bellow), ponders scentless language and the vagaries of his master, or in the shimmering surprise of ‘Here Went the Egret.’ But what

I love most in *Master of Leaves* is its central meditation on presence, on being—‘Why is *what is* so formal, he asks, and why is *what is not* so shy?’—and the way the poems drive for epiphany: ‘Learning late to listen. Everything soothed / by darkness; everything close to its lyric core.’ ”

—Richard Silberg, author of *The Horses: New and Selected Poems*

“Written by a master architect, coauthor of the canonical text *A Pattern Language*, these poems scale up and down to reveal hauntingly self-similar patterns in nature and patterns of human consciousness *in* nature. Here, language is the erotically charged, generative seed of fresh unfolding. Even the alphabet, like a fractal fern, is a ‘crazed, ecstatic branching after light.’ These poems come from a deep recognition of connection—across histories, ecologies, and boundaries.”

—Dawn McGuire, author of *The Aphasia Café*

The range of subjects in Murray Silverstein’s *Master of Leaves*—from the mind of God to a baby’s colic, from the Higgs boson to a breakfast peach, from Shakespeare and Joyce to Mother Goose—astonishes and delights. The voice that moves through this expanse is as at home in the philosophical as it is in the colloquial. These are poems spoken by a son, husband, father, and grandfather, with a tenderness that never becomes sentimental; by a man of many appetites who notices everything, from an oily rag to Rembrandt’s face “battered like an old newborn”; by a man who refuses to take himself too seriously or to dwell in lament even as he makes it part of his musical score. And there is so much music here, from the moving meditation on Monet at the beginning to the stunning final sequence on dark and light that gives the book its title. These are poems that celebrate the multiple blessings of life and time.

(see over)

Master of Leaves is the thirty-first book to be published by Sixteen Rivers Press, a poetry collective dedicated to providing an alternative publishing avenue for Bay Area poets. The press is named for the sixteen rivers that flow into San Francisco Bay.

Binding: Perfect-bound paperback

Press run: 750

Price: \$16

Page count: 96

Publication date: April 2, 2014

ISBN: 978-1-939639-05-9

Distributor: Small Press Distribution

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MURRAY SILVERSTEIN's first collection, *Any Old Wolf* (Sixteen Rivers Press, 2006), received an Independent Publisher medal for poetry. Silverstein produced the Sixteen Rivers compact disc, *Naming the Rivers* (2008), and served as executive editor for the press's anthology, *The Place That Inhabits Us: Poems of the San Francisco Bay Watershed* (2010). His poems have appeared in numerous journals, including *The Brooklyn Review*, *Hunger Mountain*, *The Louisville Review*, *Nimrod*, *Poetry East*, and *Rattle*. A practicing architect and coauthor of four books about architecture, including *A Pattern Language* (Oxford University Press) and *Patterns of Home* (The Taunton Press), Silverstein lives in Oakland, California.