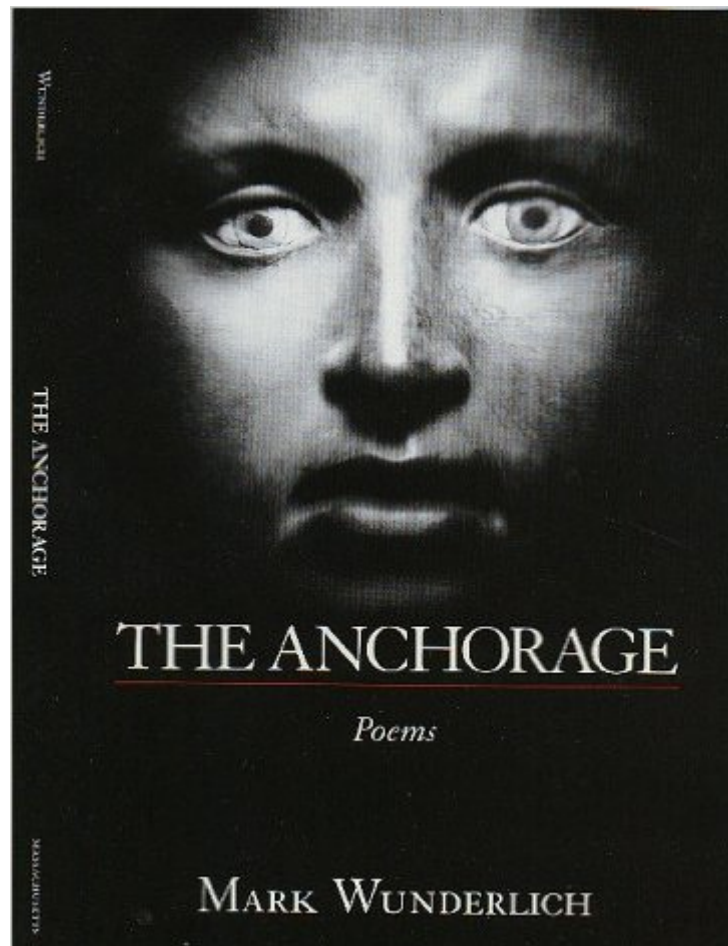


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The Anchorage: Poems



Synopsis

In this debut collection, Mark Wunderlich creates a central metaphor of the body as anchor for the soul •but it is a body in peril, one set in motion through the landscape of desire. In poems located in New York's summer streets, in the barren snowfields of Wisconsin, and along stretches of Cape Cod's open shoreline, the lover speaks to the beloved in the form of lyrical missives, arguments, and intimate monologues. The poems converse with each other; images repeat and echo in an effect that is strange and beautiful. Uniting the collection is an original and consistent voice •one that has found a hard won stance against the haphazard and negotiates with what is needful and sufficient. The Anchorage is a collection of love poems for the end of the millennium and takes as its subjects the dichotomies of love and illness, the urban and the rural, homosexual desire and familial tension. Wunderlich faces the complexities of contemporary life through poems that are both tender and striving and that leave the reader with an image of the body as a door through which one can transcend the suffering of the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I heard so much talk about this book, I didn't know what to expect. I was pleasantly surprised to find these poems speaking to me in simple but yet intellectual tones. They are easy to read but yet so deep in feeling; depressing at times, but so true to life. Especially "Fourteen Things" which was a deeply personal poem to me. I never expected to read about a personal friend of mine (Ron) in this book by this author. It brought back many wonderful memories of the friendship we shared so many

years ago. If you want to read "Poems" that speak to the heart be sure and read this book. Hopefully, we will hear from Mark Wunderlich a lot more in the near future. Looking forward to it.

It is fascinating to me to see the number of reviews of this book--obviously Mark Wunderlich has struck a nerve among readers of contemporary poetry. It's also interesting to note how politicized this discussion has become. What hasn't been said here is that these are finely crafted poems that use intense, beautiful language in a new and interesting way, and that give shape to a voice that is fully-formed and authoritative while not retreating from difficult subjects. The writer of these poems has made himself vulnerable, and that is to his credit. This reader will look forward to seeing what Wunderlich does next.

The tenacity and craftsmanship of Wunderlich's lyricism are new and marvelous -- he is never content to let episode lapse into mere anecdote; neither will he allow the mind to score easy victories over the body and its truths. Wunderlich's technique is to hammer experience into argument -- in doing so, he finds a lyric voice that has the beauty and toughness of worked metal. He manages to forge an excitingly new compromise between mind and body, and between the meditative and confessional traditions. An amazing and revelatory debut.

The dichotomy of body and spirit is precisely the wreck into which this remarkable debut collection by Mark Wunderlich wishes to dive. One feels, however, that were Mr. Wunderlich forced to choose, he would elect the body--and has; but it is out of his unflinching determination to explore the "rule" of the body and to be its postulant that Mr. Wunderlich creates this collection's exquisite tension. Hovering throughout is a longing, if not for the divine, then the ecstatic. Mr. Wunderlich's poems explore the powerful spheres of intuitive, sexual and spiritual knowing--playgrounds for the body's birds-of-paradise and spiritual harness--and do so with remarkable eloquence of feeling. The University of Massachusetts Press has done a masterful job of production on this debut volume. As such, this collection is as much a delight to hold in the hand as it is to read.

Mark Wunderlich has written an astonishing collection that explores, among other things, loneliness, deprivation, and desire--of the body and of the spirit. The poems are informed by a sad, wise voice like nothing I've heard before. Maybe that's because Mr Wunderlich seems to recognize that poetry can take language to new levels without leaving the reader behind. In every poem he builds a connection between speaker and reader, between the one and the many. This connection, for me,

is most pronounced in the prose poems, particularly "This Heat, These Human Forms" and "Chapel of the Miraculous Medal." While revealing a heart and mind unlike my own, these poems clarify my sense of what it means to be a human being--part spirit, part body--living for a short time in the world. American contemporary poetry would be diminished without this collection. We can all thank Mr Wunderlich for creating something so wise and original, so necessary.

There has been a lot of talk about this book, and not just here at .com. And it is easy to see why this book calls up such strong responses. Wunderlich writes strong poems, and they aren't always poems that make us feel good about ourselves. Many are dark and disturbed things. These poems are just the beginning . . . There is a poet here, already made, and I know I will be keeping an eye on him in the future, as will many people who love poetry. The talent Mark Wunderlich demonstrates in this book speaks to even greater things to come.

I keep typing and then deleting words like "depth" and "precision." I don't want to sound too review-y. Here's the thing. Read it -- loved it. Recommend it. These poems are really fine.

Enough said

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