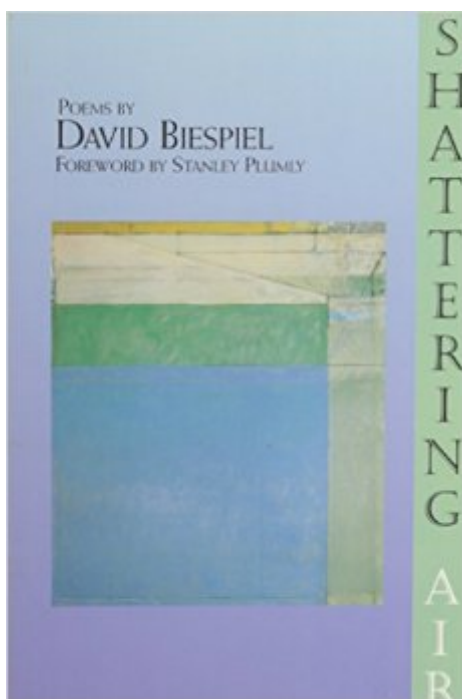


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Shattering Air (New Poets Of America)



Synopsis

"The imagination in David Biespiel's *Shattering Air* is as luminous as the heart is generous."--Stanley Plumly

Book Information

Series: New Poets of America (Book 17)

Paperback: 65 pages

Publisher: BOA Editions Ltd.; Special Edition edition (July 1, 1996)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1880238357

ISBN-13: 978-1880238356

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.3 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (4 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Biespiel's first book is subtle and vital. His work, as he says in "A Love Story," "pushes hard as a conscience." I loved the pace of the lines, the richness of the emotional content, the recurring theme of the preciousness of both love and loss, and the unique combination of dense and simple language. Best poems: "There Were No Deer in the Thicket," "I Think of Your Eyes," (which I first read on a PSA Poetry in Motion project in Portland, Oregon), "Autumn of the Body," "Tower," and "Constitutional." *Shattering Air* unites the natural world with the human spirit, in line after line, so that poetry enters one's life as a living element, like blood. When is his next book coming out? I can't wait.

I'm not sure I read the same book as the reader from Ohio. David Biespiel's first book is both original and universal. The long poem, "Holy Water" is Keatsian in its reverie and Whitmanic in its range. Whereas most new poets want to demonstrate technical, graduate-school dazzle, Biespiel is content to let a quiet, understated, mature, and haunting language penetrate a reader's emotions, to gently lead a reader down a path of revelation. I would say he is the W.S. Merwin of his generation.

The best of these mostly love poems are "There Were No Deer in the Thicket," "Holy Water," "Constitutional," "A Love Story," and the frightening narrative "Tower." It's exciting to read work from this new generation of poets. The work of David Biespiel, along with Talvikki Ansel, Christian Wiman, Campbell Mc Grath, and A.V. Christie, is setting the pace for excellence. "Shattering Air" was good the first time I read it; I've since read it again, and the effort is well-rewarded.

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Though Biespiel's poetry is technically sound and though the male perspective on abortion should offer a welcome voice, the poems here are hollow and dispassionate and at times offensive in their lack of depth. The poems here are easy to read and feel as if too easily written, despite the obvious talent of the poet.

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