

# POETRY AT THE EDGE

*Five Contemporary California Poets*



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### *Five Contemporary California Poets*

Joseph Stroud   Kay Ryan   Gary Young   Martha Ronk  
Michael Hannon

*Including a signed letterpress broadside of a poem by Kay Ryan  
laid in for Standing Order members*

The Book Club of California  
San Francisco, 2014

The Book Club of California is excited to announce its first book of poetry in over fifty years. From the inception of its publishing program in 1914, poetry featured prominently among Book Club titles. Highlights include: *Thirty-five Sonnets* by George Sterling, 1917; *Continent's End: An Anthology of Contemporary California Poets*, 1925; *Poems* by Robinson Jeffers, 1928; *Fire and Other Poems* by D.H. Lawrence, 1940; and an Annual Keepsake, *The California Poetry Folios*, featuring poems by Josephine Miles, Muriel Rukeyser, Hildegard Flanner, and Janet Lewis, 1947.

Now, in the 100th year of Book Club publications, we are thrilled to revive this tradition and publish work by five leading contemporary California poets. All of them, including former United States Poet Laureate and MacArthur Fellow Kay Ryan, are major voices of our time—pushing the boundaries of the contemporary poetic landscape from our place at the edge of the continent. As Carolee Campbell, designer and editor of the book, writes in her introduction:

*This volume gathers together the voices of five poetic masters, each distinct one from the other, yet all identical in their unerring ability to read the warms and the cools of the human heart. While they make their home in California, they are poets of the world. Each has charted a disparate course, mapping the terrain through which they travel their separate landscapes with a streamlined diction.*

To publish a book designed by Carolee Campbell is itself worthy of celebration. As proprietor of Ninja Press, founded in 1984, her highly-coveted fine press books include *The Book of Silences* by Robert Bringhurst, 2000; *The Persephones* by Nathaniel Tarn, 2009; and *Lives of the Artists* by W.S. Merwin, 2013. Each copy of *Poetry at the Edge* contains two photographs by Carolee, also an accomplished photographer.

*I must say I was dumbfounded. I don't recall when a poet unknown to me has struck me so deeply. Like all of the best poets, Stroud makes the earth again consolable.*

— Jim Harrison on Joseph Stroud

*Her poems are compact, exhilarating, strange affairs, like Erik Satie miniatures or Joseph Cornell boxes. She is an anomaly in today's literary culture: as intense and elliptical as Dickinson, as buoyant and rueful as Frost.*

— J.D. McClatchy on Kay Ryan

*Gary Young has honed a sinuous, brief prose poem form that carries a flavor uniquely its own—unflinching, stringent in beauty, austere moving. There are poems that swerve, surprise, and still see and feel with one-pointed clarity.*

— Jane Hirshfield on Gary Young

*It is not so much Martha Ronk's voice as her vision which has become so necessary—insistent, persistent, passionate, engaging simultaneously the familiar and the new. Her language is visionary in several senses of the term.*

— Bin Ramke on Martha Ronk

*Hannon takes us back to an ancient source of what poetry tries to do—explore the enigmas and mystery of being. His is a poetry of revelation and wonder. Like a great temple bell, struck hard, Hannon's poems will resonate with quietude and beatitude long after you have read them.*

— Joseph Stroud on Michael Hannon

## Production Details

*Poetry at the Edge: Five Contemporary California Poets* is the Book Club of California's 233rd publication. Each copy has been signed by all five poets. Designed and edited by Carolee Campbell at Ninja Press, the book was letterpress printed in an edition of 300 copies by Norman Clayton at Classic Letterpress in Ojai, California.

The typeface is Walbaum. The text was printed onto Zerkall Frankfurt paper with Zerkall Nideggen for the endpapers. The boards of the book are covered in an indigo sheet of pure Belgian flax, handmade at Cave Paper in Minneapolis, Minnesota especially for this edition. The book was bound by Klaus-Ullrich Röttscher at the Pettingell Book Bindery in Berkeley, California.

The photographs are by Carolee Campbell and were digitally printed at Classic Letterpress using Epson UltraChrome K3 inks.

140 of the copies include a signed broadside laid in of a poem by Kay Ryan, designed by Carolee Campbell and letterpress printed by Norman Clayton. These copies are designated for the Book Club of California's Standing Order members, who provide crucial support for the publishing program by agreeing to buy each new book upon release.

## Ordering Information

*Poetry at the Edge: Five Contemporary California Poets* will be available December 1, 2014, priced at \$200. The pre-publication price for Book Club members is \$180 (a 10% discount) for orders received by December 1, 2014. Standing Order members will receive a 15% discount, paying only \$175. Additional sales tax and shipping may apply. Requests for second copies by Book Club of California members will be honored in order of receipt, should copies remain after all first-copy orders have been filled.

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