Poetry

by Frank Bidart
WSC New Books 811.54 B474h

A volume of unyielding ambition and remarkable scope that mixes long dramatic poems with short elliptical lyrics, building on classical mythology and reinventing forms of desires that defy societal norms.

Gathered together, the poems of Frank Bidart perform one of the most remarkable transformations of the body into language in contemporary literature. His pages represent the human voice in all its extreme registers, whether it's that of the child-murderer Herbert White, the obsessive anorexic Ellen West, the tormented genius Vaslav Nijinsky, or the poet's own. And in that embodiment is a transgressive empathy, one that recognizes our wild appetites, the monsters, the misfits, the misunderstood among us and inside us. Few writers have so willingly ventured to the dark places of the human psyche and allowed themselves to be stripped bare on the page with such candor and vulnerability.

Over the past half century, Bidart has done nothing less than invent a poetics commensurate with the chaos and appetites of our experience.

PULITZER WEBSITE

Incendiary Art
by Particia Smith
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A searing portrait of the violence exacted against the bodies of African-American men in America and the grief of the women who mourn them, infused with a formal virtuosity emblematic of the poet's aesthetic sophistication and mastery of language.

semiautomatic
by Evie Shockley
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The poetry award is given for a distinguished volume of original verse by an American author.