



Poetry of Two Minds (The Life of Poetry: Poets on Their Art and Craft)

Sherod Santos

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In his long-awaited first book of prose, poet and essayist Sherod Santos takes a compelling look into some of poetry's deepest secrets, an investigation that leads him to the surprising conclusion that poems have minds of their own, minds often inaccessible even to the one who composed them.

In these essays, Santos explores not only what he thinks about poetry but also what and how poetry thinks about itself. His writings range across the history of Western poetry, from formative classical myths to modern experimental forms, and touch on subjects as diverse as the rhetorical history of cannibalism, the political and cultural uses of translation, and the current state of American poetry. Along the way, he calls on past poets like Ovid, Baudelaire, and Phyllis Wheatley, on twentieth-century poets like Wallace Stevens, H. D., and Rainer Maria Rilke, and on writers and thinkers like Montaigne, Walter Benjamin, Simone Weil, and Paul de Man.

These essays explore facets of poetry known best to one who has practiced the art for years. From the methods of poetic attention to the processes by which perception is transformed into language and from the illusive relationship between poetry and "meaning" to the integral relationship between poetry and memory, this collection delves into what it means to be a poet and how being a poet is intimately tied to one's social and cultural moment.

With Santos's trademark flair for seeking out the overlooked and unforeseeable, *A Poetry of Two Minds* is an extraordinary collection that testifies to its author's far-reaching intellectual curiosity. Readers who have delighted in his insights over the years can now have the satisfaction of having them caught between the covers of this provocative book.

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