

JOSEPH HARRISON

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POET, EDITOR

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POETRY

Publications

Books:

Sometimes I Dream That I Am Not Walt Whitman (The Waywiser Press, 2020)

Shakespeare's Horse (The Waywiser Press, 2015)

Identity Theft (The Waywiser Press, 2008)

Someone Else's Name (The Waywiser Press, 2003)

The Fly in the Ointment (1994; Syllabic Press edition, 2014)

The Imposition of Ashes (1987; Syllabic Press edition, 2017)

Anthologies:

Poems included in the following anthologies:

Leadership: Essential Writings by Our Greatest Thinkers (ed. Elizabeth D. Samet: Norton, 2015)

The Swallow Anthology of New American Poetry (ed. David Yezzi: Ohio UP, 2009)

Poetry: A Pocket Anthology (ed. R. S. Gwynn: Penguin, 2009)

Literature: A Pocket Anthology (ed. R. S. Gwynn: Penguin, 2009)

American Religious Poems (ed. Harold Bloom: Library of America, 2006)

180 More Extraordinary Poems for Every Day (ed. Billy Collins: Random House, 2005)

The Best American Poetry 1998 (ed. John Hollander: Scribner, 1998)

Journals:

Poems published in the following journals, among others:

Smartish Pace (27: April 2020)
Passager (Winter 2020)
Alabama Literary Review (28.1: 2019)
The Hopkins Review (New Series 12.4: Fall 2019)
Raritan (39.2: Fall 2019)
Parnassus (35.1 & 2, 2019)
The Antioch Review (77.2: Spring 2019)
Birmingham Poetry Review (46: Spring 2019)
The New Criterion (37.8: April 2019)
The American Scholar (88.1: Winter 2019)
The Yale Review (106.2: April 2018)
The Hudson Review (70.4: Winter 2018)
The Hopkins Review (New Series 10.3: Summer 2017)
The New York Review of Books (63.10: June 9, 2016)
Unsplendid.com (March 2015)
Sewanee Theological Review (Winter 2014)
nuovi argomenti (Winter 2014)
The Yale Review (102.4: October 2014)
The Hopkins Review (New Series 7.2: Spring 2014)
Birmingham Poetry Review (41: Spring 2014)
The Common (7: April 2014)
Poetry Northwest (8.2: Fall/Winter 2013-14)
Measure (8.2: 2013)
The Antioch Review (71.4: Fall 2013)
Parnassus (33.1 & 2: 2013)
The New Criterion (31.9: May 2013)
Arion (20.4: Fall 2012)
The Yale Review (100.4: October 2012)
Sewanee Theological Review (55.4: Michaelmas 2012)
Southwest Review (96.2: 2011)
Raritan (27.4: Spring 2008)
Smartish Pace (15: April 2008)
The Sewanee Review (116.1: Winter 2008)
Sewanee Theological Review (51.1: Christmas 2007)
The Yale Review (95.4: October 2007)
Southern Humanities Review (41.4: Fall 2007)

Southwest Review (92.3: 2007)
Sewanee Theological Review (50.3: Pentecost 2007)
Smartish Pace (14: April 2007)
Center (3: 2004)
River Styx (7: 2004)
Sewanee Theological Review (41.1: Christmas 2003)
Southern Humanities Review (37.4: Fall 2003)
Parnassus (27.1 & 2: 2003)
The Yale Review (91.3: June 2003)
The Antioch Review (60.3: Summer 2002)
The Kenyon Review (19.3/4: Summer/Fall 1997)
The Paris Review (140: Fall 1996)
Sewanee Theological Review (38.4: Michaelmas 1995)
Boston Review (20.3: Summer 1995)
The Paris Review (134: Spring 1995)
Western Humanities Review (46.2: Fall 1992)
The Missouri Review (12.2: 1989)

Online:

Poems featured on the following sites:

Poetry Daily: August 2015
Poets.org: Poem-a-Day, April 2014
Poetry Daily: October 2008
Poetry Daily: July 2004

Honors:

Shakespeare's Horse a finalist for the 2017 Poets' Prize
Fellowship in Poetry, John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, 2009
Academy Award in Literature, American Academy of Arts and Letters, 2005
Someone Else's Name a finalist for 2005 Poets' Prize
Someone Else's Name cited as one of five poetry books for the year 2004 by
the Washington Post
"Mobile Bay Jubilee" received a Theodore C. Hoepfner Award, as the best
poem published in volume 37 of *Southern Humanities Review*, in 2004
Walter E. Dakin Fellowship, Sewanee Writers' Conference, 2004
Tennessee Williams Scholarship, Sewanee Writers' Conference, 1994

Readings:

Readings given at the following places (among many others):

The University of Baltimore
Catholic University
Columbus State University
Emory University (as part of “A Fine Excess” poetry conference)
Evansville University
Johns Hopkins University
McNeese State University
Old Dominion University
The University of Oregon
Queens University, Charlotte
Towson University
Troy University, Montgomery
Troy University, Troy
UCLA/Hammer Museum, Los Angeles
UC Santa Barbara (as part of conference “On the Anthropocene”)
Washington College, Maryland
Yale University
John Cabot University (Rome)
Christ’s College, Oxford University (UK)
The Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere (UK)
The London Arts Guild (UK)
The Poetry Society, London (UK)
The Callanwolde Fine Arts Center, Atlanta, Georgia
The Jule Collins Museum of Fine Arts, Auburn, Alabama
The Hugo House, Seattle
The Seattle Art Museum
Sewanee Writers’ Conference
West Chester Poetry Conference
McNally Jackson Books (New York City)
Politics & Prose (Washington, D. C.)

Commendations:

praise for *Sometimes I Dream That I Am Not Walt Whitman* (2020):

“We are at a moment in the history of literary culture when traditional standards of clarity, eloquence, aesthetic splendor, refined comedy, and civilized pathos have been set aside. I read a great deal of contemporary poetry. Not many volumes hearten me, Joseph Harrison’s new one does. The Walt Whitman poems catch him as only Pessoa/Campos does. The Charles Dickens poem brilliantly exemplifies what John Ruskin meant when he talked of Dickens’ ‘stage fire’. “Mark Strand” returns me to my own dreams about my late friend. Best of all is “Shakespeare’s Head,” an achieved phantasmagorial of permanent power.”--Harold Bloom

“In Joseph Harrison’s hands, verse *is* an art, a living art, and a generous one. ‘The dead keep singing,’ he writes in ‘River of Song,’ and they do in the lyric ventriloquism through these pages: Frost, Auden, Stevens, Dickinson, Baudelaire, Hardy, Shakespeare, and most surprisingly, Whitman. Harrison’s tight forms gesture toward psychic volcanos and hurricanes, and his rhymes deploy lethal wit as in “Runaway Blimp,” about a military-industrial boondoggle where “a multi-billion dollar clusterfuck” clicks with “run amok.” His dexterities don’t just serve satire; the poems play a wide scale of feelings: tenderness, wonder, wry meditation, indignation, and fury. A selfless book, in the best sense.” --- Rosanna Warren

“In his brilliant, dark, and companionable new book, *Sometimes I Dream That I Am Not Walt Whitman*, Joseph Harrison, one of American poetry’s best-kept secrets channels the voices and spirits of dead poets as wide ranging and diverse as Mark Strand, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens, and Walt Whitman himself. But Harrison never merely ventriloquizes these and other voices; or if he does the ventriloquism, as he implies in his amazing sequence, “The Compromised Ventriloquist,” is reciprocal--such that, as he says elsewhere in the book, “every transformation / Becomes another act of self-creation.” This book obliterates the dichotomies of self-expression and impersonality, personal disclosure and self-effacement, tradition and innovation. In the place of such facile and misleading oppositions Harrison has written a book that engages the particularities of our moment with a hawk’s eye view of linguistic, metrical and cultural history. The imagination that animates these poems is intimate and vatic, prophetic and mundane, scientific and fantastic; the music is all

his own yet everyone's, "dark and deep / And cold as interstellar night," while unforgettably humane. I love this book". --- Alan Shapiro

"His suite of cannily resonant imitations of the good gray poet notwithstanding, Joseph Harrison is indeed not Walt Whitman, nor does he seek to be, but his verse responds eloquently to the ardent prediction in *Democratic Vistas* that the "highest poems" to come would spring from "the assumption that the process of reading is . . . in the highest sense, an exercise, a gymnast's struggle." Harrison's intensely wrought poems reward the reader well beyond the demands they make. Ebullient yet concentrated products of an audacious prosodist and syntactician, an exhilarating logophile and a master of tone, they evince a maker's maker. A set of poems in Emily Dickinson's mode balances the Whitman suite, and Frost and Stevens, Yeats and Auden and Merrill ghost happily through this volume, itself a "unity of network." It compasses "structures of posed placidity"--structures that arise, we come to know, from an "intemperate liquidity / Whose outbursts, unpredictable, reveal / A flare for the dramatic." --- Stephen Yenser

praise for *Shakespeare's Horse* (2015):

"Joseph Harrison's poetry is modern without being modernist. That is, he employs the tools and materials of traditional poetry to construct a kind of verse that is appealingly new, yet never transgressively so. His poems reflect a renewed lustre in our direction, and we come away deeply refreshed."-- John Ashbery

"*Shakespeare's Horse* is Joseph Harrison's full emergence as his own poet, still in the eloquent and formal tradition of Richard Wilbur and Anthony Hecht but with an accent now pitched in a new mode. Among the book's triumphs are 'Wakefield,' the wonderful 'Dr. Johnson Rolls Down a Hill,' 'Damon,' and 'Harrison's Clock.' Yet I take a particular joy in the brief but enigmatic 'Hamlet' and the remarkable title sonnet.

"The kind of comedy that Harrison works into his subtle meditations is refreshingly original. Should he further refine his already agile art, there will be no one in his American generation who so challenges the eye and the ear to come together."--Harold Bloom

praise for *Identity Theft* (2008):

“How deeply satisfying it is to read a poet whose meditative, elegiac temperament is married happily to verbal wit, even laugh-out-loud humor. Joseph Harrison is that rare poet, one whose command of craft suits him equally to produce a two line ‘Ode’ (‘O elevated visionary thoughts, / Where are you now?’) and a ten-page public poem (‘To George Washington in Baltimore’) on that American giant who understood the ‘human scale.’ A poet so giddy with wordplay that he dares to rhyme ‘my palm is piloted’ with ‘Pontius Pilated’ and ‘pirated,’ Harrison addresses nonetheless the most serious concerns. Wary of our technology-dominated present and future, in which ‘identity theft’ is no joke (and ‘what fave new world is beckoning?’), Harrison makes his fingerprint evident in all of these poems--an implicit affirmation of something unique in each of us.”--Mary Jo Salter

“The title poem of Joseph Harrison’s second book is a witty and headlong discussion of how one’s self, if any, is constituted. We are a patchwork, it develops, and the same might be said of Harrison’s book, which makes continual and expert use of Spenser, Wordsworth, Horace, Villon, and other predecessors. If this makes *Identity Theft* seem a three-ring circus, the important point is that Harrison is a superlative ringmaster: his book throughout is governed by that playfulness and performance which, as Frost said, are required in poetry however impassioned or serious. I found myself particularly moved by ‘Who They Were,’ which recalls the poet’s mother and father in the stanza of Tennyson’s ‘In Memoriam.’”--Richard Wilbur

“Joseph Harrison’s new volume is a wonderful leap in his poetic development. Harrison fuses formal control with a rich interiority and composes many poems that deserve to become canonical.”--Harold Bloom

praise for *Someone Else’s Name* (2003):

“Joseph Harrison’s outstanding first book of poems, *Someone Else’s Name*, reads like many good poets’ third or fourth one. It is marked by a rare stylistic authority and imaginative energy, and by what one critic has praised as the mutual animation of ‘deep poetic learning and passionate responses to immediate experience’ that his poems reveal.”--citation for Academy Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters

“*Someone Else’s Name* is a first book full of stunning performances, each one infused with wit, feeling, and humanity, and each one delighting in the full use of the medium and its devices. It’s a happy thing to witness the emergence of such a talent.”--Richard Wilbur

“Mr. Harrison’s technique never fails him, his capacity for conveying the deepest and most subtle feelings is sure and accurate. Best of all, in every poem here, irrespective of mood or weight, the reader will encounter the sheer joy of a poet gladdened by his own art, alive to the liberties and limits of form and imagination--playful, serious, gifted, multi-vocal, and athletically adroit.”--Anthony Hecht, from the introduction

praise for Joseph Harrison:

“Joseph Harrison writes like an angel.”--Rachel Hadas, *Boston Review*

“Harrison is a poet of great formal flamboyance. There seems to be no measure, no verse-form, at which he is not quite utterly dazzling. His poems exhibit a resonant awareness of the entire tradition of English verse. . . . If he revels in echoes, these are mastered echoes, audaciously launched both in homage to tradition and in its defence.”--Eric Ormsby, *Standpoint*

EDITORIAL

Senior American Editor, The Waywiser Press, since 2008

Editorial Board of The Waywiser Press, since 2004

Director, Anthony Hecht Poetry Prize, since 2005

Chairman of the Hecht Prize Committee, since 2010

Editor, *The Hecht Prize Anthology*, 2005-2009 (Waywiser: 2011)

Edited, with Damiano Abeni, and wrote the introduction to *Un mondo che no puo essere migliore: Poesie scelte 1956-2007* (trans. Abeni and Egan: Luca Sosella, 2008), an Italian selection of John Ashbery’s poetry, which won a Special Prize from the Premio Napoli in 2008

Wrote the afterword to *I Vespri Veneziani* (trans. Abeni and Egan: Edizioni L’Obliquo, (2011), a translation of Anthony Hecht’s *The Venetian Vespers*

Wrote the afterword to *Il mondo non finisce* (trans. Abeni: Donzelli, 2001), a translation of Charles Simic’s *The World Does Not End*