

Graywolf Press announces



Sad Little Breathing Machine by Matthea Harvey

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“A young poet to watch.” —*Publishers Weekly*

Matthea Harvey’s stunning second collection, *SAD LITTLE BREATHING MACHINE* (March 2004), was chosen as a **finalist for the 2003 James Laughlin Award** from the Academy of American Poets. Harvey’s debut collection was praised by the *New Yorker* as “intensely visual, mournfully comic and syntactically inventive.”

“I pictured myself arriving at an amusement park, only none of the rides are familiar. I considered running away. I could break my neck or be catapulted into the sky. I might never be seen again. It’s only poetry, I reminded myself, and climbed on board. I’m tossed and bucked and jabbed and lashed and flipped. I’m having a nearly insane amount of fun, and I don’t want it to ever end.”
—**James Tate**

In *Sad Little Breathing Machine*, Matthea Harvey explores the strange and intricate mechanics of human systems—of the body, of thought, of language itself. These are the engines, like poetry, that propel both our comprehension and misunderstanding. “If you’re lucky,” Harvey writes, “after a number of // revolutions, you’ll / feel something catch.”

With engaging intelligence and restless humor, these poems create discrete and miniaturized worlds, out of which broken lyric, disjunctive prose, and surreal narrative are spun. Harvey’s remarkable array of styles and visual structures expresses a cosmology of rebellion, play, and pleas for the individual mind to imagine itself, both within and outside of the very systems it has created. *Sad Little Breathing Machine* confirms Matthea Harvey as one of the most vibrant and original new voices in contemporary poetry.

“The poems in Matthea Harvey’s new book, *Sad Little Breathing Machine*, are gimlet sharp. So much happens in their small, hard shapes: wit, sorrow, and an intelligence that nips and worries its subjects into giving up their full oddity and originality. A reader does not consume this poetry. She is, instead, pinched and prodded towards revelation. Each neat poem is a Pandora’s box full of wonderful troubles.” —**Lynn Emanuel**

Matthea Harvey is the author of *Pity the Bathtub Its Forced Embrace of the Human Form*. She is the poetry editor of *American Letters & Commentary* and lives in Brooklyn.

Poetry, 80 pages, 6 x 9, Paperback Original (1-55597-396-5), \$14.00, **March**

PRAISE FOR *PITY THE BATHTUB ITS FORCED EMBRACE OF THE HUMAN FORM*:

“In Harvey’s intensely visual debut collection of poems, a painter says of his self-portrait, ‘It was bigger than me. The perspective was not min.’ Throughout, we meet artists and eccentrics obsessed with the reflections they cast, often shaping the world to match their own private illusions: a gardener ‘crows with/delight; as his sugar maple takes the form of a rooster; a woman paints her baseboards the color of her dachshund. Mournfully comic and syntactically inventive, Harvey’s poems are both please for attentiveness (‘Amaze me with/what you know. Do the barnacles really look/like ancient daisies, did the starfish really/turn orange & purple from holding on?’) and elegies for the images we try, but fail, to capture.” —*The New Yorker*

“The poems here show how our capacity for wit, play, and invention may be saving graces in a world all too prone to blankness and indifference. . . .the world of these poems seems to sparkle with effortless possibility.” —*Harvard Review*

“Pity the Bathtub Its Forced Embrace of the Human Form (has there been a more suggestive, happy, goofy-in-a-good way title for a book recently?) is a book about the possibility and impossibility of making art. . . .Beautiful writing, sensuous and troubling.” —*Colorado Review*

“Flecked with color and taking lively twists and turns, this first collection displays a rather remarkable breadth. All of the poems are well wrought, displaying verbal acuity and an overarching structure that lands the reader in the most unexpected places. Highly recommended.” —*Library Journal*

“Harvey’s poems are like striking paintings that haunt us for days after studying them.” —*The Black Warrior Review*