



## The New Measures

*A.F. Moritz*

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The follow up to *The Sentinel*, winner of the Griffin Poetry Prize, A.F. Moritz's *The New Measures* is a bold collection of fiery, passionate, visionary, and fiercely singing new work. These poems make unique music, by turns tender and forceful, terrified and assured, grateful and enraged. They revel in pleasure, and the thirst for more pleasure. And they insist on the hope — perhaps paradoxical, perhaps impossible, yet never extinguished — for the perfection of a world both natural and human. *The New Measures* makes fear and grief into prophecy and joy at each turn of phrase. It is a brilliant new work from one of our greatest poets.

## The New Measures Details

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## From Reader Review The New Measures for online ebook

### Anna (lion\_reads) says

"What will you be in that cross alley  
you'll turn into, where I can't see?"

I am not a worthy critic of poetry, but I can say that many poems in this collection moved me or had evoked a wistful nostalgia for a moment in time I can re-feel but can't fully remember. In my naïveté I might call the poems beautiful and their rhythm intoxicating. They insist on being heard, urging you to keep going and keep returning to the human capacity to find wonder in the smallest, most primal things.

"...Anyway, yesterday  
I had this idea, this line of lyrics  
to put to a bird's song I heard  
from the mirror boskage in the underground city.  
Everything that comes has come before  
but in some other, forgotten shape  
that was never, or badly, born  
and insists, waiting to be loved properly."

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### Nick Seeger says

I loved the way this collection of poems set out to renew itself at every turn. The poems felt connected, yet distinct, cumulative yet tangential.

Though my favourite poems were littered throughout the volume (Farewell to Lake Michigan most of all) the first and last poems seem a near-perfect arc under which these poems flourish. The Book to Come sets up the theme of renewal perfectly, yet it is in Open House where it seems to be consummated. Here, what seems like a dream or a fading memory is revised and retold, recast in various ways while continuously questioning its own motives.

It's a fine book of poems to be sure. The writing flowed so naturally that I had to remind myself on many separate occasions to slow down and take it all in.

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### mwpm says

The first and simplest things were best.  
Light, and then darkness and wind.  
Water, which is light with darkness  
for its body and wind  
for its blood and action. Then trees  
arise on its banks: complex things  
and implying complexities, implying

a whole earth, but staying where they are,  
at home to pay homage to the simple.  
Trees arise and are unformed song,  
whether sound when the air stirs  
or the rhythm of their standing side by side  
in silent black or bright. Next comes one  
traveling, eager, a dread of what comes next,  
who stops under them awhile,  
imagines their lyrics, and imagines  
himself abolished in simplicity.

- **Simplicity**, pg. 2

\* \* \*

Scum of life on the ponds  
clearing as it dies off in autumn  
so they will stare up, bright, black and still  
amid the last crumbs - a few towers  
of leather, copper, and flame - of the first wonder  
of the world. Many eyes with one gaze  
waiting for never to rise. The angel  
who brought us the idea  
is always here, nude winter and summer,  
unmovingly wandering in the fields and weeping by the stream  
under the willow tree, whether they are fields,  
stream, and willow, or later desert. The angel  
is always right here, as we are,  
when the sun and the planet swing away  
and leave us in black space. We make  
love to the angel ceaselessly,  
monotonously: the body  
all sex and every sex with no insides,  
our love that never moves  
while we desert and revolve.

- **The Idea of the Flood**, pg. 14

\* \* \*

The cob of corn - is this  
your transformation,  
your earth-change? Having  
eaten you, do I  
hold you again? Did  
you drop into the land  
as a seed to come forth  
a blade of grass

like a tree, with kernels  
that are teeth, cool  
close-packed suns, drops  
of a golden ocean,  
nuggets of sugar? And  
can I talk to the blackbirds  
and the spiders that  
cling to you, making you  
some part of their worlds,  
as if they are syllables  
meant in friendship and  
gathering to a sentence  
intelligible to me? You  
are dead and this life  
doesn't satisfy. It  
seems to me I'm alone  
if sometimes happy to be.

- **Symbolism**, pg. 25

\* \* \*

Although it's likely you're on your own  
(at this moment in this city of five million)  
reading the poems of Traherne,  
and there was no one till you lit your lamp,  
the kingdom of childhood keeps being founded  
in his voice and his seeing,  
which are a sort of birth. A birth goes on  
in the dark of a poor family, or a mother alone.  
Then comes the small bright circle of the faces:  
lover pores over sleeping loved one, parent over child  
in their enclosure we name home,  
a hut in the plain so bare there's not a tongue  
of grass to make the wind hiss. Unknown  
to the world a world exists:  
trees and streams, birds all the colours of the flowers.  
So Traherne pours over you  
his wild remembrance of the world to come. And would  
even in the silence of his book  
if it were lost and lay unopened  
two hundred years. Even if he had died  
before he sang the Eden in his look.

- **Essential Poem, for John Hollander**, pg. 39

\* \* \*

Time was still.  
To stop that nonsense  
a helicopter  
beat the sky.

- **Noon in Our World**, pg. 41

\* \* \*

The poem I want to write you is a dream  
but I can't dream it with you, only tell you,  
wide awake, what it was like. "You stood in a doorway  
and caught my eye across the room.  
I'd thought you were in India, and I came walking  
through the air, above the heads of the others,  
but there was something I was supposed to bring you,  
a cup, or some sort of long animal  
with soft rubies for fur. So I turned back  
and went looking for that, worried,  
not knowing what it was..." And you would think,  
listening to the dream, I had a face in it, my face,  
that I was only me, walking on the air  
near the ceiling of that room like a mountain valley  
with geometrical cave palaces  
carved into the cliffs to thousands of feet  
above a flowering jungle. I got lost there  
and never made it back to where you waited.  
Then I woke up. So now I have to tell you:  
in that dream I have no face, or not this face.  
I have no awareness of a face. You look at me  
as if I stir you: a human being, a man, beautiful.  
When you see me, light flows out of you, your lips,  
forehead, white dress, the round of hips and belly.  
And I look back at you free of shame. My face  
forgotten, like a child's. I'm not surprised  
my face that brought me failure brings your light.

- **Analysis of a Dream**, pg. 58

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**Andrew Sare says**

Each Page in this book is first. Each re-begins

, The Book to Come

