



## A Wild Surmise

New & Selected Poems & Recordings

Eloise Klein Healy

*A Wild Surmise: New & Selected Poems & Recordings* is Eloise Klein Healy's seventh book of poetry and the first that includes an audio component. Included are poems from all her previous collections, including her award-winning first collection, *Building Some Changes*, as well as *Artemis In Echo Park* and *The Islands Project: Poems For Sappho*. Healy's work is immediately recognizable as poetry written by a woman under the influence of feminism, freeway traffic, wilderness (especially in the city), and a uniquely tuned sense of craft. Her work travels easily across time zones, mythologies, the politics of love, and the inevitable loss of family and friends. She searches for a lesbian tradition in literature, lamenting the erasure of lesbian writers and the fragmented history of their work. But Healy's poetry is not without humor, nor does it shy away from such topics as baseball and the companionship of canines. Like life, poetry to her is "a wild surmise"—never totally translatable, but always worth the attempt.

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*A Wild Surmise: New & Selected Poems & Recordings*

By Eloise Klein Healy

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248 pages

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### Biographical note:

**Eloise Klein Healy** is the first Poet Laureate of Los Angeles. She is the author of six previous books of poetry and three spoken word recordings. She was the founding chair of the MFA in Creative Writing Program at Antioch University Los Angeles where she is Distinguished Professor of Creative Writing Emerita. Healy directed the Women's Studies Program at California State University Northridge and taught in the Feminist Studio Workshop at The Woman's Building in Los Angeles. She is the founding editor of Arktoi Books, an imprint of Red Hen Press specializing in the work of lesbian authors.

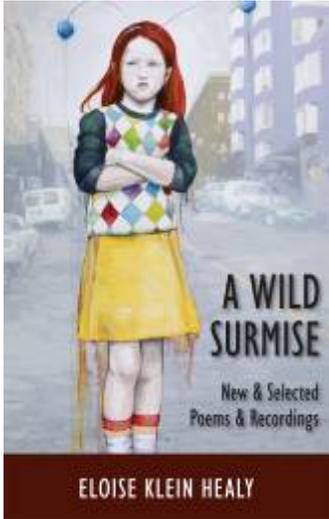
### Praise for *A Wild Surmise: New & Selected Poems & Recordings*:

"What a delight it is to have gathered here these poems from previous collections—as well as new poems—from a poet I have admired for years. Eloise Klein Healy's straightforward and wry wit underscores her wisdom and the peacefulness that comes from a deeply humane emotional and intellectual knowledge. *A Wild Surmise* touches on so many things with such clarity and precision it's like having a handbook to guide us through the world."

—Natasha Trethewey, U.S. Poet Laureate, 2012



**More Praise for *A Wild Surmise: New & Selected Poems & Recordings*:**



“*A Wild Surmise* is full of appreciation for the physical—from the freeways of LA and ball bearings pouring into a pan to the sun smell of her dog’s fur. From chili-flakes in a shaker to Greek scrolls buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. And through these vivid moments we are given glimpses into the life of a lesbian poet and the culture in which she wrote beginning in the 70s and continuing to the present. Reading Eloise Klein Healy’s *New & Selected Poems* is like sitting down with a dear friend with a strong cup of tea or a glass of wine and being given the gift of a deep and generous sharing.”

—Ellen Bass, co-author of *The Courage to Heal*

“I first read Eloise Klein Healy’s wonderful and deceptively simple poem ‘What Is Being Forgotten’ sometime in the seventies, and I am happy to say that I never forgot. That unassuming lyric built on itself over the years—as did its speaker, living and forging this beguiling collection of poems as lyrics that work simply but which turn simplicity around in the hand, showing us the intimacy of all its sides, wild included. ‘I didn’t need saving,/just revising,’ says the speaker in one poem. This is sacred, discovered ground, and I am happy to share in the hold of what is being remembered.”

—Alberto Ríos, author of *Whispering to Fool the Wind*

“Why do I love Eloise’s poetry? Because it is so rooted in her love of LA, and other sacred places only Eloise would know. She celebrates so lovingly the sensual bodies of neighborhood, cars, beach, freeway, lover, creature—she places us all the way into the life cycles of reality. This collection is witty, sensual, full of sagacity and surprise, exquisitely beautiful. Fine poetry to be read again and again.”

—Judy Grahn, author of *love belongs to those who do the feeling*

**“The Grackle On The Lawn”**

She wants the blossom.  
She wants the seeds in the grass.

She wants the beautiful thing.  
She wants to eat.

It’s so simple, she’s like a person.

She wants the beautiful thing.  
She wants to eat.

She’s like a person, she wants to live  
with that beautiful blossom and she wants to eat.

She flies off with the blossom in her beak.





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## A Note from the Author Regarding the Recordings of the Poems

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There has been much talk about what is going to be the fate of “the book” in this electronic age. Most speculation centers on getting the book into another “form” that is downloadable from the Internet from a variety of sources. The only certainty is that it is too soon to tell what the final outcome will be. It seems, however, that the book and its descendants are here to stay.

But how about putting elements of the electronic age into a book?

When it came time to think about what I could do with my new and selected poems collection—the book of it—I felt that using a current technology could enhance a book of poetry by putting a reading inside it. Not a compact disc tucked in a special fold of a book jacket or a plastic box, but “on” the page with the poem.

The current technology in question, the QR, or quick response code, a square of squiggles linked to a web address and read by a smart phone application, seemed the perfect answer. This lowly advertising device could be made to deliver the poem and the poet to the reader. So, for however long this technology lasts, the QR codes in this book will maintain their links to poems recorded by me at Harlan Steinberger’s Hen House Studios. The recording can also be accessed at my website where they will stay as long as websites are around. (<http://www.eloisekleinhealy.com> )

What is probably temporary is this technology; what is likely a little more lasting is poetry itself.

One can find QR code readers to download onto a smart phone or other mobile electronic device from various websites and stores offering these applications online. Directions for their use are offered at these sites as well. There are many wild surmises in my book—please enjoy this one.

—Eloise Klein Healy  
Los Angeles, CA  
June 19, 2012