



News from

Red Hen Press

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Miracle Day

Mid-Life Songs by

Sebastian Matthews

Miracle Day: Mid-Life Songs, Sebastian Matthews' second book of poems, explores the main themes of midlife—sex and death, marriage and parenthood, work and play, friends and foes, travel and staying put. Moving back and forth between couplets and the single-stanza poem, Matthews writes about the world he is immersed in, whether listening in on an impromptu barbershop quartet with his son or driving through urban Philadelphia on a misguided whim. Matthews continues his interest in jazz and musicians but has broadened his palate to include ruminations on everything from the 1948 summer session at Black Mountain College to Jack Benny's legendary corn-belt comedy routines.

Miracle Day

Mid-Life Songs by Sebastian Matthews

ISBN: 978-1-59709-173-2

6 x 9; Tradepaper

104 pages

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Biographical note:

Sebastian Matthews is the author of the poetry collection *We Generous* (Red Hen Press) and a memoir, *In My Father's Footsteps* (W. W. Norton). He co-edited, with Stanley Plumly, *Search Party: Collected Poems of William Matthews* (a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize) and *New Hope for the Dead: Uncollected William Matthews*. Matthews teaches at Warren Wilson College and serves on the faculty of the Queens College Low-Residency MFA in Creative Writing program, as well as on the editorial board of Q Ave Press, makers of handmade poetry chapbooks. His work has appeared in journals such as the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *American Poetry Review*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, and *Tin House*.

Praise for *Miracle Day*:

“Sebastian Matthews’ poetry has an enviable and light-hearted spontaneity. He has a voice and an eye that act like velcro, picking up all the sights and sounds around him. His way of looking at the world, of observing the world without withdrawing from it, acknowledges and allows itself to be haunted by memory but still expresses and articulates a true gratitude for the present. Taken as a whole, his poetry is a moving record of how music through time, words through time, and people through time connect and console us.”

—Jennifer Grotz



More Praise for Sebastian Matthews:



“Sebastian Matthews has obviously listened with considerable care to great musicians, and he can reflect the rhythm of their art without aping it. He is able to float authoritatively like one of the accomplished soloists of jazz—Sonny Rollins, Bill Evans, John Coltrane. He focuses well, and when he gets rolling, he knows how to turn and ‘do’ things.”

—Paul Zimmer, *Georgia Review*

“Sebastian Matthews writes a poetry that is wonderfully, and unfashionably, human.”

—Dana Levin

“Andy on the Corner”

He’s gone so can’t say
if this dream of mine is off base

but I picture him now
on anonymous city corner

leaning back in a tan jacket
not so much preaching as paying

attention, waiting for one lost soul
to appear. He claps a back

in greeting or nods in a way
that says *I know where you’re at,*

have been there, seen it all,
brother. You can talk to me.

And of course that lost soul is
me, is you, is Trina walking the trail

as a way to move through her grief.
Everything hinges on our sore hands

clasped in his, the embrace, how
he leads us to the rundown diner

for a cup of coffee and a chance
to say a few words about our lives.

—from *Miracle Day*





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