



News from

Red Hen Press

P.O. Box 40820 Pasadena, CA 91114 (626) 356-4760 fax: (626) 356-9974 redhen.org

But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise

Poetry by

Lillian-Yvonne Bertram

Winner of the 2010 Benjamin Saltman Poetry Award, *But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise* emerges at a time when science is discovering more and more about the mystical particles that make up our universe and our bodies. Straddling the lyrical and experimental, these poems conjure and connect the cosmological, the carnal, and the personal in a country—and a universe—that is gobbling itself into oblivion. *But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise* is in love with the universe of language—its forms, its sounds, and even its static.

But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise

Poetry by Lillian-Yvonne Bertram

ISBN: 978-1-59709-168-8

6 x 9; Tradepaper

104 pages

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Biographical note:

Lillian-Yvonne Bertram has been a Bread Loaf Writers' Conference scholarship winner, a Cave Canem fellow, and a writer-in-residence at the Montana Artists' Refuge. Her poetry has appeared in *Black Warrior Review*, *Callaloo*, *Gulf Coast*, *Harvard Review*, *Indiana Review*, *Narrative Magazine*, *Subtropics*, and other journals. She received first place in the 2011 Summer Literary Seminars poetry contest and won the *Gulf Coast Magazine* Donald Barthelme Prize for Short Prose. Bertram is a graduate of the writing programs at Carnegie Mellon and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She was a 2009-2011 Gaius Charles Bolin Fellow at Williams College where she taught creative writing and literature. Currently, she lives in Salt Lake City where she is pursuing her PhD in Creative Writing at the University of Utah. Her first book, *But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise*, won Red Hen Press's 2010 Benjamin Saltman Poetry Award, judged by Claudia Rankine.

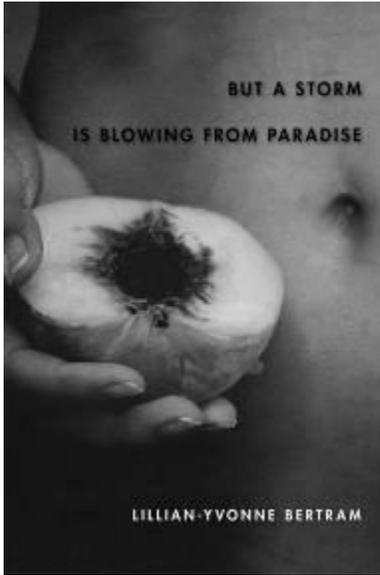
Praise for *But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise*:

“Lillian-Yvonne Bertram’s *But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise* is an offering to those of us for whom normalcy is the constant shift between a sense of location and dislocation. The shrewdness of these poems accumulates into a critique of our American desires and failures. The precision of Bertram’s lyrical and agile language is born out of the specificity of her gaze on what subliminally feels like a road trip through the towns that make up this country. These unforgettable poems awaken images so masterfully that reading and seeing become one thing: ‘We are claimed by middle country/where the river is cooked to steam in the factory belly/& every quivering shadow is missing its father.’ This award winning collection is an American portrait in which the poems are themselves, in Bertram’s words, ‘the elliptical mystery or the grief that walks different on everyone...’ It’s exhilarating to read poetry that pushes reading into the realm of experience.”

—Claudia Rankine, Final Judge, 2010 Benjamin Saltman Award



More Praise for *But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise*:



“The promise to ‘learn/ more about the cosmos then apply/ that knowledge to the arts’ could serve well as a maxim for these brilliant, adventuresome poems. Lillian-Yvonne Bertram is charting a wonderful new path through contemporary poetry. Touched but never bound by singular doctrines of narrative, lyric or experiment, her poems merge linguistic zeal with capacious imagination. *But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise* is a trailblazing debut, and Lillian-Yvonne Bertram is not simply a poet to watch, she is a poet to follow.”

—Terrance Hayes

“What’s a storm doing in Paradise to begin with? I blame the Poet. And why’s it blowing this way? I blame Bertram. Radiowoman’s got ‘jukebox growth’ up and down the dial, hitting frequencies high and low. What’s that you say, Barking Dog? ‘Inferior & menstus’? Ha. Storm blowing this way is a book of smart songs that part the curtains of Paradise. Storm blowing this way, hip to brain, is a poet you’ll be reading for years. ‘O thuggish awakening’? Bring it on.”

—Steve Davenport, author of *Uncontainable Noise*

“*But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise* is a rich book with plenty of channels coming through loud and clear. There’s plenty of thinking (and imagining) happening on the page. Bravo, Bertram.”

—Rigoberto Gonzalez, *Harriet*

“And just as storms are beautiful from a distance, violent from within, and we never fully understand their magnitude until they have passed over, so the poetry of *But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise* leaves us in its wake to reveal what is, after all that has come, all that has been tossed in the wind.”

—Lori A. May for *Rattle*



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The Body Deformed by Tidal Forces

Darkness still here, hunkered against the trees.
Spring so uneasy this year.
No matter morning's boundary culling our bodies,
another romantic passage assaults us!
O limp future centered on this body!
In the model solar system, planets suspend & twirl
as if from a spider's whirl.
The quantum in backpedal, in decline, spring so un-
gripping this year. Bored mouth. Bored fingers.
The umpteenth day/night running like such—
truly, truly—this troubling with physics!
Not still winter, not yet anything.

O thuggish awakening.
All planets but this one were named after gods.

—from *But a Storm is Blowing From Paradise*



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