



News from

Red Hen Press

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## The Horses: New and Selected

Poetry by

Richard Silberg

This new and selected brings together a dramatic sweep of poetry from one of the San Francisco Bay Area's best-loved poet-critics. Four of Richard Silberg's books are included here, beginning with his first, *Translucent Gears*, published in 1982, through *Doubleless*, published in 2000. A previously unpublished long narrative-meditation interweaves a coming-of-age memoir, the Lurianic Cabala, and pure lyrical sections, topped off with a sharp, striking suite of new poems.

This is a book that masterfully balances several poetic strains rarely found together in a single body of work. The writing is accessible, presented in the form of narratives, descriptions, and dramatic monologues, but Silberg is also an adept of the image, of the poetic figure that leaps to epiphany. In yet another direction, a number of these poems move towards a kind of pure saying. Silberg's puns and language play on themselves at the threshold to philosophy. His sensibility is born out of the counterculture—warm, sexual, mystic, by turns funny, tough, and elegiac. He's a maverick, a singer, and an entertainer who believes in William Carlos Williams' maxim, "If it ain't a pleasure, it ain't a poem."

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*The Horses: New and Selected*

Poetry by Richard Silberg

ISBN: 978-1-59709-231-9

6 x 9; Tradepaper

248 pages

Price: US \$24.95

Release Date: September 1, 2012

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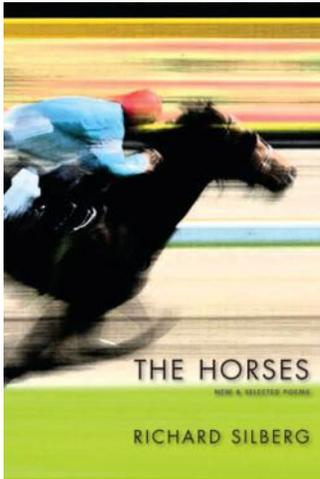
### Biographical note:

**Richard Silberg** is a poet, critic, translator, and Associate Editor of *Poetry Flash*. His poetry book, *Deconstruction of the Blues*, received the 2006 PEN Oakland-Josephine Miles Literary Award and was nominated for the Northern California Book Award. He is the author of *Reading the Sphere: A Geography of Contemporary American Poetry*, as well as essays and several translations, among them *The Three Way Tavern*, by South Korean poet Ko Un, which won the 2007 Northern California Book Award. *This Side of Time*, poems by Ko Un co-translated by Clare You and Richard Silberg, is forthcoming from White Pine Press. His poems have appeared in *The American Poetry Review*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Volt*, *Parthenon West Review*, *ZYZZYVA*, *Eleven Eleven*, and *New American Writing*, among many other journals. He lives in Berkeley, California.

### Praise for *The Horses: New and Selected*:

"Dynamic, kaleidoscopic, shot through with a thousand faces and voices too real to be characters, Richard Silberg's work is a Chaucerian pilgrimage to strange and uncannily familiar places—Fremont, the Lower East Side, 'the humped island of Mind.' *The Horses* is a journey that dazzles wherever it goes as Silberg, 'an ecstatic balding older man / in a striped tee shirt,' slips into words and finds a way to make them accelerate, plummet, and soar. The goal is a new self, a way to ride out the old isms towards a possible future. *The Horses* is a deeply serious, wild, and powerful contribution to American letters."

—D. Nurkse, author of *The Border Kingdom*



**More Praise for *The Horses: New and Selected*:**

“Richard Silberg is a scat cat razzing and jazzing and boom-shika-booming down the page-stage, because as he says in one poem, poetry is ‘not abstract / there’s a catness to the sound.’ He tosses his lines like chicken bones on the table, and in their gnawed-down economy we can divine the sad and marvelous lives of the lesbian stripper witch, of the Jewish mother and the Gorilla woman, of the be-mused boyman learning the way to ‘eat at the world with words’ before it eats him and becomes itself ghost world lost in goneness. These poems are timeriffs and deathrants and they are written with a profound humanity, and with a ‘crying so deep / it was like coming / bitter crying / crying sweet like milk.’”

—Tony Barnstone, poet, translator, author of *The Golem of Los Angeles*

**Excerpt from “A Song for a Piano Player”**

Sleazing in a basement  
in Northern California  
I hear the black kids  
hoot from Harlem  
horn fisted graceful  
as scary sugar

My Daddy comes  
to me moping  
a pack rat  
torn sheet and rubber mat  
in my teen-age thirties  
a writer living in bare places

—from *The Horses: New and Selected*

