



Country of Ghost
Poetry by Gaylord Brewer
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Size: 6 x 9; Pages: 120
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Pub Date: March 24, 2015



Gaylord Brewer

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For more information contact:

Samantha Haney
Marketing Associate
samantha@redhen.org

William Chen
Publicist
william.chen@redhen.org

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Chicago Distribution Center
(800) 621-2736
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“The world of feeling that Brewer so urgently describes is complicated and dynamic.”

—*Asheville Poetry Review*

Gaylord Brewer’s ninth collection of poetry, *Country of Ghost*, is by turns harrowing, haunted, and darkly humorous, and always deeply felt. When the figure, Ghost, appears—crossing a bridge in Spain, beside a river of the dead in France, across a midnight lake in Finland—our speaker follows into a ravenous geography of longing and regret. In this astounding sequence of poems, who has summonsed whom? Brewer’s *folie à deux* explores both the worlds of the living and of the dead, worlds alternately aching and tender, and of the spirits caught between them.

Praise for *Country of Ghost*

“Brewer writes as if a sly old god, wounded, lost and yet to renounce his magic. Ghost is a tour de force, part Caliban, part Ariel. Revenant, bored, hungry and amazed, Ghost will be with us ever hereafter.”

—Robert Olmstead

“In this work of haunting, the possibilities for fruitful speculation and reflection are great. Gaylord Brewer’s poems in *Country of Ghost* are, at once, whimsical and deeply affecting in their pathos. The many ghosts that inhabit these poems contend with the conundrum of regret, and desire. It takes precise, well-modulated poetry that is alive with metaphor, wicked puns, image, and acutely observed detail to achieve what Brewer does in *Country of Ghost*.”

—Kwame Dawes

“The poems are eerie, achingly honest, conversational, and beautifully, darkly funny. Even if we are tempted to turn away from the rotting, breaking, bruised, and bleeding body, we are drawn in by the human need, the fragility, the nostalgia, the bittersweet longing of the speaker and his Ghost.”

—*Prick of the Spindle*

Biographical Note

Gaylord Brewer, a native of Louisville, Kentucky, earned a PhD from Ohio State University. He currently teaches at Middle Tennessee State University, where he founded and for twenty-one years edited the journal *Poems & Plays*. His most recent publication is a cookbook/memoir, *The Poet’s Guide to Food, Drink, & Desire* (Stephen F. Austin UP, 2014). He has published 900 poems in journals and anthologies, such as *Best American Poetry* and *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*.



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More Praise for Gaylord Brewer

“Brewer manages to masterfully balance the ordinary and extraordinary. The consequent contrasts and juxtapositions elevate both conditions of ‘ordinariness’ into a kind of equilibrium of the sublime. A trademark Brewer poem: craft, precision, self-analysis, humor, endurance, and a razor-sharp epiphany.”
—*The Evansville Review*

“The world of feeling that Brewer so urgently describes is complicated and dynamic.”
—*Asheville Poetry Review*

From *Country of Ghost*

“Ghost Addresses the Virgin with a Fond Farewell”

Averted glance neither come-on nor dismissal—
a tease. Literally, she sees right through your kind.
You’ve come to enjoy her unerring profile,
girlish lips, gold gilt of modest shawl. Her halo

crooked antenna of another world.
What scores, songs, holy static she receives.
She’s a good listener, doesn’t mind staring,
even caress of shoulder. And not the cold bargain

you’d expect. Warm, polished from the wood.
Fate, chance, or nothing at all delivered you
to her detailed bust, bolted in place—as not to fall
or be spirited away, rude protection nonetheless—

to a recess of wall washed a child’s blue.
Even a brute such as *toi* has appreciated stillness,
studied common quiet, tithed hours
aping her placid certainty. This grotto getaway.

Three days now, your time together finished.
A marriage of sorts? Fingers trace glowing cheek,
smooth neck. She gets in a ghost’s head.
Goodbye, dear Mary. Put in a fair word for me.