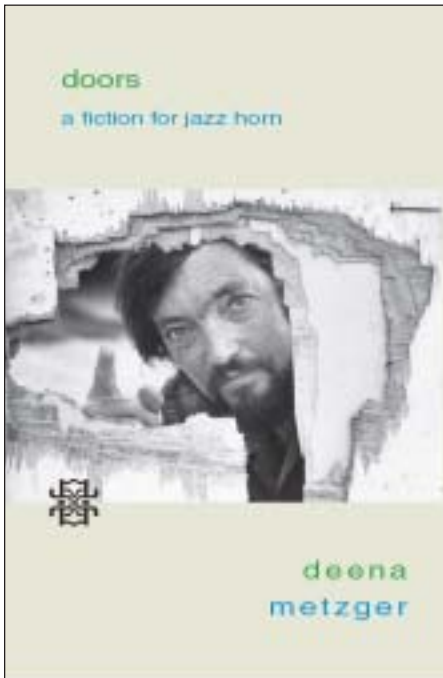


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Deena Metzger

What does it mean to meet the spirit in our mundane world? How do we communicate with the "other side?" Can we really forge a proof that the dead live on among us?

A young American writer, having long admired the work of Argentine writer Julio Cortázar, travels to France in 1974 to meet him, hoping to commune with a literary soul mate and to create a political alliance in the face of the brutal coup that has overtaken Chile. But circumstances compromise their brief encounter, and for years afterwards, though she and Cortázar correspond through books and letters, she feels unfulfilled by what she knows could have been a far more meaningful collaboration between them.

The writer feels this loss all the more keenly when Julio Cortázar dies . . . until inexplicable signs and portents lead her to understand that their relationship has not ended; the deceased writer may have more to say to her. She becomes obsessed with "reaching" Cortázar. She tries to summon him into her life with all the force of her mind, heart, and will. She imagines writing a book with a dead man, but without resorting to trickery or fantasy, and her attempts to conjure forth Cortázar's spirit create a bizarre triangle between Julio, the writer and her bemused husband.

Ultimately the writer's search for the door that will open between two worlds leads her to question the very nature of reality . . . and to the strange, joyous climax of her seemingly impossible quest.

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—Ariel Dorfman

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