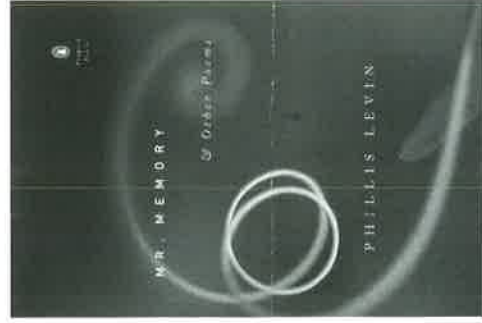


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An intimate, richly textured new collection from Phillis Levin, a poet whose work “shimmers with gracefulness” (David Baker)



MR. MEMORY & OTHER POEMS by PHILLIS LEVIN

PRAISE FOR *MR. MEMORY & OTHER POEMS*:

“The poems in *Mr. Memory* are a fusion of keen intellect, passion, and wit. Phillis Levin has a sure grasp of the astonishing powers of the poetic line and the energy contained therein; in her shorter poems, she employs an exacting and meticulous phrase-making, yet she is also adept at writing ambitious longer poems of a meditative, philosophical, or elegiac cast. Full of wonder and mystery, these poems transform the experience of ordinary life into something dream-like and visionary. Levin is a poet who knows ‘...we stand undone by all / We recognize...’, yet has the courage to embrace the shattering transformations that result.” —**Elizabeth Spires**

“Phillis Levin’s own signature is in some lines in a poem about a lost soul in the first grade, named Victor, where she says ‘I / Could be everywhere at once, inhabit / Any mind, occupy any pair of shoes.’ And she does just that in *Mr. Memory*, whether it is a lost scarf she is inhabiting, or ash in a fire, or the Odessa steps, or a grave in Lithuania, or a dot on the horizon, or a dead poet. The Other is not just close to her heart, it *is* her heart.” —**Gerald Stern**

“I’ve always deeply admired the way Phillis Levin combines suggestiveness of statement with subtlety of feeling. Her sequence of poems in the consciousness of Zeno, the Greek philosopher, are as mordant and full of longing as Zbigniew Herbert’s *Mr. Cogito*. She never fans the air with some single faculty, but in every encounter in every poem the full force of all her faculties achieves a sacramental completeness of understanding.” —**Tom Sleigh**

Encompassing a wide array of styles and voices, the mesmerizing poems in **MR. MEMORY & OTHER POEMS** (Penguin Poets; On-sale: March 29, 2016; ISBN: 9780143128113; \$18.00), Phillis Levin’s fifth collection, possess something beautiful and permanent at their core. Widely published and anthologized, Levin has been the recipient of some of poetry’s most coveted honors, including the Poetry Society of America’s Norma Farber First Book Award. Here, Levin stays true to the visionary impulses—sparked as much by the smallest details as by the most sublime landscape—that have propelled her award-winning writing career.

From expansive meditation to haiku, in ode and epistle, dream sequence and elegy, Levin’s new poems explore motifs deeply social and historical, personal and metaphysical. Their various strategies deploy the sonic powers of lyric, the montage techniques of cinema, and the atavistic energies of the oral tradition. Throughout this volume, the singularity of person, place, and thing—and the plurality of our experience—assert their uncanny presence: an ash on a crackling log, a character from Alfred Hitchcock’s *The 39 Steps*, a burgundy scarf, an X-ray of Bruegel’s “Massacre of the Innocents,” and a demitasse cup from Dresden are all woven into a collection by turns rhapsodic and ironic, caustic and incantatory. The pre-Socratic mathematician Zeno facing the riddle of an ordinary day; a pair of second-hand shoes bought for Anne Frank; two crows at play above the peak of a mountain; a dot flickering on the horizon: intimate and philosophical, these poems unveil the metamorphic properties of mind and nature.



MR. MEMORY... deftly leaps among its personae, dictions, and styles, assembling a grand union of poems that individually seek out new patterns of expression yet collectively become its own sublime voice: "Alive I was—I didn't speak a bit; even so, I die. / Once I was, I am again..." This beautifully composed collection bridges the innermost to the outermost reaches of our imaginations, experiences, and memories.

ADDITIONAL PRAISE FOR THE WORK OF PHILLIS LEVIN

"Phillis Levin's work is tragic, audaciously playful, and redeeming. She is a marvelous architect and an amazingly moving poet."—**Tomaž Salamun**

"Like the element of its title, Phillis Levin's poetry is at once weighty, elusive, versatile, and unique. Levin commands many modes but a single and beautifully authoritative and intelligent voice. She is one of the best poets writing in this country."—**Rachel Hadas**

"Shaped by a metaphysical sensibility that is at once fiercely cerebral and deeply passionate, and that responds to both rigorous logic and spiritual mystery, the poems in *Mercury* mediate repeatedly between heart and mind, faith and science, the domain of ideas (and words) and the physical world, setting us down inside a restless, relentless mind that, torn between these poles, strives continually against imbalance and fragmentation and for equipoise, harmony, wholeness."—**Bruce Bawer, *The Hudson Review***

"Phillis Levin reaches beyond form and beyond occasion to draw in a deep, light mystery: the world we know and yet do not know, until we meet it here in her mercurial poems."—**Jean Valentine**

"In the elegant formulations of her second collection, *The Afterimage*, Phillis Levin explores the gaps and forges the links between language, thought, and matter. She is an 'alchemist of the vernacular' whose clarities are hard-won and whose mindfulness is lit by a passionate flame."—**Edward Hirsch**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Phillis Levin is the author of *Temples and Fields*, *The Afterimage*, *Mercury*, and *May Day*, and editor of *The Penguin Book of the Sonnet*. Widely anthologized, her work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Poetry*, *Paris Review*, *The Atlantic*, *Poetry London*, *Southwest Review*, *Yale Review*, *Agni*, *Kenyon Review*, and *The Best American Poetry*. She teaches in the MFA program in Creative Writing at Hofstra University and resides in New York.

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