
What is love? According to ...and love..., a poetry anthology, it is a varied and diverse emotional and physical landscape. Each poem in this collection embodies the many places, spaces, times, moments, and faces of love, from erotic love to the love between parent and child. The title of this book could easily could be “food and love, ““high school and love.” One thing it is not is Shakespeare and love meant in the most positive of contexts. The poems of ...and love.... are a modern twist on an ages old topic.

Dannye Romine Powell’s “Let’s Say We Haven’t Seen Each Other Since Ninth Grade and We Meet as Adults at a Welcome Center in Southside Virginia,” opens this volume by taking the reader on a tactile journey through memory and young love. Each sense is evoked through the movement across the human form. The discovery of a new thing in the mature form of an old beau opens the reader to the idea that love is a journey.

In “Listening to Roderigo’s Concerto for Guitar,” by Julie Suk, readers experience the searing pain of the loss of a child at birth and a husband’s attempt at healing, by playing his wife as a guitar. This poem highlights the interplay between the physical and emotional, in one moment both sensual and cathartic.

But more than about love ...and love.... is about identity as illustrated in Bruce Lader’s “Behold.” Lader’s “Behold” constrains itself, but is powerful in its stance not to open up to love at some appointed hour. The narrator instead will decide when, if ever, to pursue or be pursued by love. There is a sense of agency in the poem not often conveyed in odes to love.

“The Mundane but Discreet Lovely Details of Our Daily Lives” by Paul Jones begins with a first stanza that is reminiscent of “This is Just to Say” by William Carlos Williams, but in the following stanzas pays a fitting tribute to the artistry of the everyday, making the mundane majestic. If only taking out the garbage were so truly enthralling.

...and love.... is a poetic journey through the many visages of love. At times it is a smooth and familiar ride taking us through our own memories of love, and at other times it opens the reader up to the other facets of love. It brings together over one hundred poets with connections to North Carolina and is a worthy anthology to add to any poetry lover’s library. The editors, Richard Krawiec, Allison Elrod, and Debra Kaufman, are established authors whose works include two novels, five anthologies, and works published across a broad spectrum of literary formats. and love ... will work well for an academic or public library setting. Some guidance might be required for those not yet in high school.

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