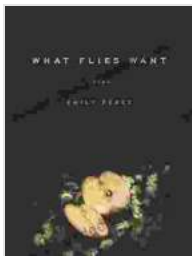


What Flies Want: An Exploration of the Iowa Poetry Prize

In the realm of American literature, the Iowa Poetry Prize stands as a beacon of excellence, recognizing and celebrating the most exceptional contemporary poetry. Established in 1969, this prestigious award has left an indelible mark on the literary landscape, shaping the trajectory of poets and inspiring readers with its unwavering commitment to the art form.



What Flies Want: Poems (Iowa Poetry Prize) by Emily Pérez

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 424 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Print length : 77 pages



A Brief History: The Genesis of an Icon

The Iowa Poetry Prize owes its inception to the vision of Paul Engle, a renowned poet and director of the Iowa Writers' Workshop. Engle sought to create a platform where emerging and established poets could share their most compelling works with an audience beyond the confines of the workshop.

The inaugural prize was awarded in 1969 to John Ashbery for his groundbreaking collection, *The Tennis Court Oath*. Since then, the Iowa

Poetry Prize has consistently honored poets who push the boundaries of poetic expression, challenging conventions and captivating readers with their unique voices.

Criteria for Selection: Discerning the Exceptional

The Iowa Poetry Prize is awarded annually to a single poet for a manuscript of original poems. The selection process is rigorous, involving a panel of esteemed judges who meticulously evaluate each submission based on the following criteria:

- **Literary Merit:** The poems must exhibit exceptional poetic skill, technical proficiency, and originality.
- **Coherence and Unity:** The manuscript as a whole should possess a cohesive structure and thematic unity.
- **Freshness of Perspective:** The poems should demonstrate a unique and compelling voice, offering fresh insights into the human experience.
- **Innovative Use of Language:** The poet must exhibit a mastery of language, employing it in innovative ways to create evocative imagery and nuanced meanings.

Past Winners: A Constellation of Poetic Luminaries

The Iowa Poetry Prize has honored an illustrious roster of poets over the years, including:

- John Ashbery (1969)
- Sylvia Plath (1972)

- Adrienne Rich (1973)
- Louise Glück (1985)
- Mark Doty (1996)
- Billy Collins (2003)
- Tracy K. Smith (2013)

These award-winning poets have left an enduring legacy in contemporary poetry, their words resonating with readers across generations.

Impact: Shaping the Poetic Landscape

The Iowa Poetry Prize has had a profound impact on the literary landscape in several ways:

- **Prestige and Recognition:** The prize elevates the careers of winning poets, bringing them widespread critical and public acclaim.
- **Publication Opportunities:** The winning manuscript is published by the University of Iowa Press, ensuring its dissemination to a larger audience.
- **Inspiration for Emerging Poets:** The prize serves as a beacon for aspiring poets, encouraging them to strive for excellence and innovation.
- **Literary Canon:** The winning poems have contributed significantly to the American poetry canon, influencing the course of contemporary poetic practice.

: A Testament to Poetic Excellence

The Iowa Poetry Prize stands as a testament to the enduring power and importance of poetry in our society. Its unwavering commitment to excellence has fostered a vibrant and diverse literary landscape, enriching the lives of countless readers and writers.

As the prize enters its sixth decade, it continues to inspire, challenge, and celebrate the art of poetry. With its legacy of recognizing exceptional talent and shaping the course of contemporary literature, the Iowa Poetry Prize remains an indispensable force in the literary world.

For those drawn to the enigmatic world of poetry, the Iowa Poetry Prize offers a tantalizing glimpse into the minds of some of the most visionary and gifted poets of our time.



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