

QIRCANEY

SINÉAD MORRISSEY *Parallax*



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Capturing David Niven on a magical marble escalator to heaven in 1946, recording L. S. Lowry's studio after his death, and peering into the illicit worlds of the Victorian Mutoscope, these poems document what is caught, and what is lost, when houses and cityscapes, servants and saboteurs are arrested in time by photography. Assured and unsettling, Sinéad Morrissey's poems explore the paradoxes in what is seen, read, and misread in the surfaces of the presented world.

Parallax Details

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From Reader Review Parallax for online ebook

Jennifer says

I enjoyed 'this' year's TS Eliot prizewinner and feel it would repay repeated reading. I enjoyed the rhythms and the themes, but it did not grab me by the heart in the way some poetry does.

Sandra says

You never finish reading a book of poetry: different times, different occasions bring different enjoyments, insights, resonances. From cover to cover not an ideal way to do it. So I have tried to savour these, no more than a couple at a time. Some make me ache with a yearning to repeat experiences so I can savour them as fully, or use my senses more effectively. Yet I am grateful that someone else can do it for me, alert me to the need to do better next time.

And the book itself remains, of course, within reach.

Doralee Brooks says

I enjoy most the unique and varied perspectives presented in these poems, domestic, other-worldly, fantastical, intriguing, rewarding.

Hillingdon Libraries says

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Pamela Scott says

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This is my first time reading a full collection by this author. I've read her work before in anthologies. I enjoyed this collection. I found the poems engrossing, rich and vivid. Many of the poems in this collection are narrative. You don't often get a lot of narrative poetry. This was a rare treat. The poems in Parallax are varied, some are very short, less than a page and others run to pages. I liked the fact each poem was different. Unfortunately, the poems did not grab my heart the way some poetry does. Parallax is a strong collection but not very special. I enjoyed Shadows, The Evil Key and The House of Osiris in the Field of Reeds the most.

Violaine says

A beautiful, beautiful collection with evocations of Belfast's past, the Soviet Union, travels, photography, family, getting older.

Andrew says

A highly engrossing & vigorous collection from Northern Ireland's green side; Belfast's 1st Poet Laureate displays more than the narrow sectarian-ism of so many Irish artists, with a range & depth as deep as Lough Neagh, showing a good grasp of form, subject & rhythm. I enjoyed her flights of personal fancy, whether imagining Dorothy Wordsworth's quotidian thoughts ('1801') or a rapt new mother's love for her child ('Daughter'). Sinead Morrissey even mentions my life-long stamping-ground of Croydon...hardly mentioned in the dusty annals of poetry!...(though that old stalwart Betjeman gives a nod to Addiscombe (where I sit writing this!)) in 'Display'. And a whole piece, 'Fur', is dedicated to one of my all-time favourite paintings before which I have passed, contemplatively, minutes at a time in London's National Gallery (a great place, once upon a time, to pick-up nubile American Art majors!), 'The Ambassadors' by Hans Holbein...which I use as my desk-top background!! She even makes a bow to Raymond Chandler...another personal favourite in 'The High Window';

..."a PI who never simply talks but utters/ wisecracks like a jeweller stringing pearls;"

I feel an affinity (even a synchronicity?) with Morrissey's vision of the mundane & banal becoming the stuff & substance of great poetry.

"Too obvious a touch/ to set the white skull straight....Better/ to paint it as something other:"
-- from 'Fur'.

To show things as something other seems a good definition of at least one of the requirements of memorable poetry; I will remember some of Sinead Morrissey's latest view of her private world as easily as I remember an Art major from Omaha, Nebraska:

"as golden days must ripen the greenest corn,
harvested by my silver-tongued scholarship
satisfied by success, now sated,
with queasy feasting on full-flavoured siloes
of sun-blest simplicity".

Did I really write that? Inspired by Holbein, Caravaggio & Constable? My field of dreams?
Enjoy Sinead Morrissey's field of dreams...poetry of high quality indeed!

Karen Wellsbury says

Sinead Morrissey's actual voice is perfect for these poems, and her reading them was my first exposure to her poetry, and while some poems translate well into internal reading, these work really well read aloud. Her ability to create images with words is awe inspiring

Alarie says

I bought this book at a reading by Morrissey while she was on a three-week book tour in the U.S. She's the Poet Laureate of Belfast. Her lovely brogue and colorful back stories added greatly to my enjoyment. For example, her eight-year-old son was tracking where she was appearing each day. When she told him, "Kansas City," he asked, "Do they have color there?"

Morrissey's poems are meaty, narrative poems, many about U.K. history that was new to me, as well as poems reflecting her travels. In addition to *Parallax*, this volume includes selected poems from three earlier books. I especially enjoyed her poems about her family. You can find her only (for now) villanelle, "Genetics," online. In "An Anatomy of Smell," she writes, "Hallways of childhood families and friends had smells, family smells/that...slipped giveaways...of who made who, of what was left to tell/made suddenly clear in every detail as if recently rained on."

While I'm a fan of short poetry, her vivid storytelling abilities kept me interested through eleven pages of "The State of the Prisons: A History of John Howard, Prison Reformer, 1726-1790."

Sienna says

Some interesting ekphrastic pieces in here — I love the mental stretch accompanying poems that reframe your understanding of what a poem can be. Morrissey writes them mischievously, thoughtfully, skillfully.

Mandy Haggith says

So good I want to read everything else she has written.
