

On Language Presence and Invisible Animal Architectures: Wesleyan Poetry Series

The Wesleyan Poetry Series is one of the most prestigious and long-running poetry series in the United States. Founded in 1959, the series has published over 1,000 books of poetry by some of the most important poets of the 20th and 21st centuries, including W.H. Auden, Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Creeley, Carolyn Kizer, and John Ashbery.

In recent years, the Wesleyan Poetry Series has become increasingly interested in publishing work that explores the relationship between language, presence, and the animal world. This interest is evident in the series' publication of such books as Brenda Hillman's *Practical Water*, which explores the relationship between language and the ocean; Cole Swensen's *Noise That Stays Noise*, which investigates the relationship between language and sound; and Mary Ruefle's *Trances of the Blast*, which explores the relationship between language and the natural world.



Edges & Fray: on language, presence, and (invisible) animal architectures (Wesleyan Poetry Series)

by Danielle Vogel

 5 out of 5

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This essay will explore the Wesleyan Poetry Series' interest in the relationship between language, presence, and the animal world. I will argue that this interest is part of a larger trend in contemporary poetry to explore the ways in which language can be used to create a sense of presence and to evoke the animal world.

Language Presence

The concept of language presence is central to the Wesleyan Poetry Series' interest in the relationship between language and the animal world. Language presence refers to the way in which language can be used to create a sense of immediacy and intimacy. This can be achieved through the use of vivid imagery, sensory details, and concrete language.

For example, in her poem "The Monarchs," Brenda Hillman uses vivid imagery and sensory details to create a sense of immediacy and intimacy with the natural world:

- > The monarchs are here > their wings, a sudden > blaze of orange
- > They light on the > zinnias, their wings > brushing the pollen

Hillman's poem is full of sensory details that help to create a sense of presence. The reader can see the monarchs' wings, feel the pollen on their wings, and hear the sound of their wings brushing against the zinnias. This sensory detail helps to create a sense of immediacy and intimacy with the natural world.

Invisible Animal Architectures

The Wesleyan Poetry Series' interest in the relationship between language and the animal world is also evident in its publication of books that explore the ways in which animals use language to create their own worlds. These books include such works as Cole Swensen's *Noise That Stays Noise*, which investigates the relationship between language and sound; and Mary Ruefle's *Trances of the Blast*, which explores the relationship between language and the natural world.

Swensen's book *Noise That Stays Noise* is a meditation on the relationship between language and sound. Swensen explores the ways in which sound can be used to create meaning, and the ways in which language can be used to describe and evoke sound. In her poem "The Bees," Swensen uses language to describe the sound of bees buzzing:

- > The bees are buzzing > in the trees.
- > Their wings beat > like tiny drums.

Swensen's poem is a good example of how language can be used to describe and evoke sound. The reader can hear the sound of the bees' wings beating like tiny drums. This sensory detail helps to create a sense of presence and intimacy with the natural world.

Ruefle's book *Trances of the Blast* is a meditation on the relationship between language and the natural world. Ruefle explores the ways in which language can be used to describe and evoke the natural world, and the ways in which the natural world can be used to inspire language. In her poem "The Sky," Ruefle uses language to describe the sky:

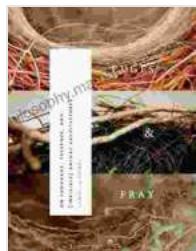
- > The sky is a blue > that is almost purple.

> It is a blue that is > so deep it is almost black.

Ruefle's poem is a good example of how language can be used to describe and evoke the natural world. The reader can see the blue of the sky, and feel the depth of its color. This sensory detail helps to create a sense of presence and intimacy with the natural world.

The Wesleyan Poetry Series' interest in the relationship between language, presence, and the animal world is part of a larger trend in contemporary poetry to explore the ways in which language can be used to create a sense of presence and to evoke the animal world. This interest is evident in the series' publication of such books as Brenda Hillman's *Practical Water*, which explores the relationship between language and the ocean; Cole Swensen's *Noise That Stays Noise*, which investigates the relationship between language and sound; and Mary Ruefle's *Trances of the Blast*, which explores the relationship between language and the natural world.

These books are all examples of how language can be used to create a sense of presence and to evoke the animal world



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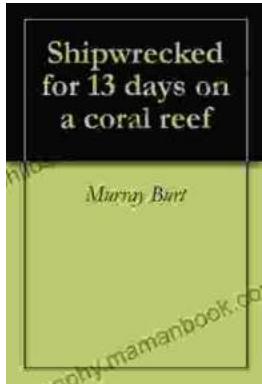
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