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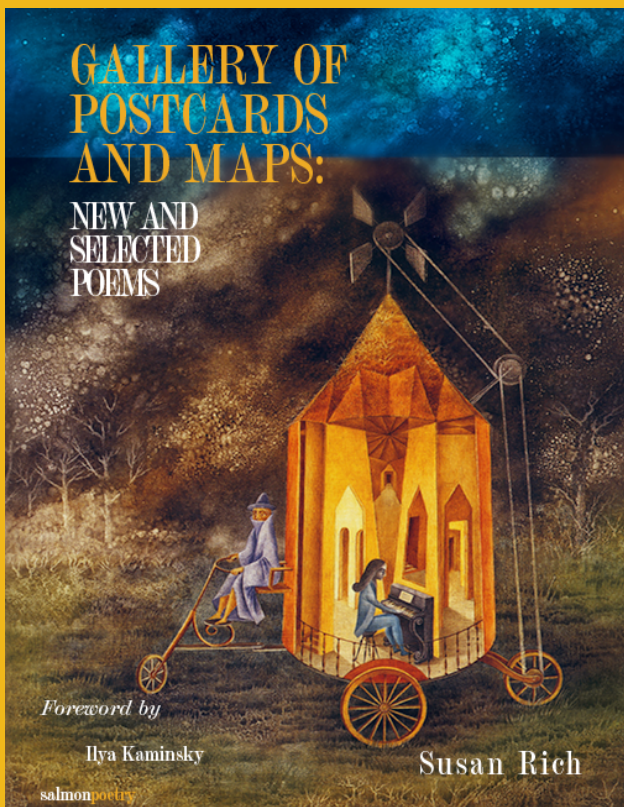
SUSAN RICH

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An introduction to the new and selected:

A Gallery of Postcards and Maps: New and Selected Poems collects the essential and award-winning poems from Susan Rich's four books of poetry along with a generous selection of unpublished work. Rich's poetry spans the last twenty years through a life engaged with human rights, compassion, and questions of travel. As a teacher, wanderer, and former journalist, Rich's lyric poems work to amplify the beauty we overlook, the nature of home, and the liminal spaces between the personal and global.



AVAILABLE SPRING

From
Salmon Poetry



BLURBS

The new and selected poems of *Gallery of Postcards and Maps* introduce themselves with a warmth that deepens into wisdom. Susan Rich finds music in everything inside and outside her windows: Leonora Carrington, Vegetarian Vampires, lovers and ex-lovers, Lorca and Courbet. This book displays the hallmarks of her oeuvre: her mastery of form; her acuity of heart and eye. These terrific poems are full of compassion, lyricism and attention. The selected reflects an ever-present restlessness of spirit, flesh, and intellect. Glad I got to read it.

“TERRANCE HAYES

Susan Rich's *Gallery of Postcards and Maps: New and Selected Poems* is a wondrous and wonderful collection. It gathers poems from her four volumes of poetry while featuring a stellar selection of new work. Perceptive and honest, these masterful poems represent a life's journey full of imagination, desire, and craft, always striving for transcendence—"knowing yes! is the one chosen thing." This expansive collection is both a work of art and a map for what it means to be an artist.

“JANUARY GILL O'NEIL

With Susan Rich's new and selected poems, *Gallery of Postcards and Maps*, we are given a poet's meditative journey through time, history, memory, desire. It is "a collage of wanting," a swirling, hallucinogenic "quest into the miraculous." These poems create a deep conversation with artists, works of art, the world itself as art, and, above all, with the wild, living planet itself. At one point, Rich asks—*How to write your one blue life?* This *Gallery of Postcards and Maps* serves as a guidebook and a poetic response to that very question. Rich is a lighthouse poet—a poet who returns us to the harbor of the self while also illuminating the wide and mysterious world we live in.

“BRIAN TURNER



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BIO

Susan Rich is the author of five poetry collections including *Gallery of Postcards and Maps: New and Selected Poems*, *Cloud Pharmacy*, *The Alchemist's Kitchen*, named a finalist for the Foreword Prize and the Washington State Book Award, *Cures Include Travel*, and *The Cartographer's Tongue*, winner of the PEN USA Award. She co-edited *The Strangest of Theatres: Poets Writing Across Borders* (McSweeney's). Rich has received awards and fellowships from the Fulbright Foundation, PEN USA, The Times Literary Supplement of London, Peace Corps Writers, Artist Trust, CityArtists, and 4Culture.

Her poems have been published in the *Academy of American Poets: Poem-a-Day*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Antioch Review*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Gettysburg Review*, *Harvard Review*, *Image Journal*, *New England Review*, *O Magazine*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *World Literature Today*, and numerous anthologies.

Educated at Harvard University, the University of Massachusetts, and the University of Oregon, Susan Rich lives in Seattle and teaches at Highline College where she runs the reading series, Highline Listens: Writers Read Their Work. She is co-founder and director of Poets on the Coast: A Weekend Writing Retreat for Women.

RECENT HONORS

PEN USA, Literary Award for Poetry

Times Literary Supplement (London), Poetry Prize

Fulbright Fellowship, South Africa

Foreword Book of the Year Prize, Finalist

Artist Trust Fellowship, Artist Trust

Washington State Book Award, Finalist

4Culture Award(s)

Tieferet Writing Contest

Julie Suk Prize, Finalist

CityArtist Project, Seattle Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs

Jack Straw Writers Program, Curator & Fellow



SAMPLE POEMS

Self Portrait as Leonora Carrington Painting

I never understood how it happened
the doorknob turning left, not right,
until the different selves assembled:
how I recognized myself in the blue chair
like a hangover of sky complete with hyena
and rocking horse. A kind of overworked
alchemy that made the chair legs wear the same
boots that I wore—painted with a delicate dab—
six buttons up the side like soused constellations
working afterhours. And when no one was there,
the horse, shoeless, stumbled out the doorway,
mane matted and unadorned. She
cantered to the orchard for just a moment—
yet, in her clouded loneliness, how she howled—
how she opened her ginger mouth to the sky—
apricots buzzing on the branches as if to join
her. How did she transform from toy
to Pegasus? How do I toss off my blue dress
of missteps and instead choose a star map
that slips me through to another galaxy? Good-bye
to the asparagus of self-doubt, the onionskin envelope
of the lonely. Instead, let this hangover open
into uncharted happiness, let the sweetness be dangerous.
Unfasten the windows from their frames, take off
the rooftop from the triple decker house—join the hyena,
the horse, and the girl. Offer them wings.

SAMPLE POEMS

Mohamud at the Mosque

for my student upon his graduation

And some time later in the lingering
blaze of summer, in the first days
after September 11th you phoned –

*if I don't tell anyone my name, I'll
pass for an African American.*
And suddenly, this seemed a sensible solution –

the best protection: to be a black man
born in America, more invisible than
Somali, Muslim, asylum seeker –

Others stayed away that first Friday
but your uncle insisted that you pray.
How fortunes change so swiftly

I hear you say. And as you parallel
park across from the Tukwila
mosque, a young woman cries out –

her fears unfurling beside your battered car
go back where you came from!
You stand, both of you, dazzling there

in the mid-day light, her pavement
facing off along your parking strip.
You tell me she is only trying

to protect her lawn, her trees,
her untended heart – already
alarmed by its directive.

And when the neighborhood
policeman appears, asks
you, asks her, asks all the others –

So what seems to be the problem?
He actually expects an answer,
as if any of us could name it –

as if perhaps your prayers
chanted as this cop stands guard
watching over your windshield

during the entire service
might hold back the world
we did not want to know.

SAMPLE POEMS

Someday I Will Love Susan Rich

Often a woman struggles to mention herself.
She hems and haws like a blackbird,
her gaze turned downwards towards the glitter of a pie
tin or caught by the brass bell hanging from the door
of her dad's corner store. The bird isn't dumb.
It knows that wanting has its own rock bottom
which no tool or stratagem can fix.
Eventually the hawk shows up
in swan's clothing; eventually the garden
fills with chipped mirrors and cracked
dinner plates. But what's wrong with that?
Why not make a collage of wanting?
Isn't it worse not to want? So what
if it ends in disaster? If we finish
in shelter-in-place with only a long pier
of desire, a Legend song
and an evening stroll along the shoreline—
won't it still have been worth it?
I have this idea that I might survive;
find myself brighter than a hummingbird's folly.
Even if I remember none of this;
if the clouds mask the Olympic range
and the air transubstantiates to bread soup—
I am still one superhighway
of flesh and fingertips and kaleidoscopic vision.
Someday, my name and I will enlist
all of ourselves — we'll sign on for a lifetime
membership to exist in a seal call, inhabit
one incisor of a cascade fox.

PRAISE

... From *The Alchemist's Kitchen* spills an abundance of the world's fruits, herbs and pastries, gestures of hospitality and regard, for Susan Rich is a poet who writes in the midst of things, and out of a searing awareness of loss and what it means to be spiritually awake, to behold human life in all its possibility, pathos and transience and yet say yes.

“**Carolyn Forché**

As the title, *Cures Include Travel*, suggests, these are ambitious poems that seek to grab hold of the larger world: a homeless youth in South Africa, a seamstress in Gaza, a Somali woman fleeing civil war. As an election supervisor in Bosnia, a Fulbright Fellow in South America, and a human rights trainer in Gaza, Susan Rich has traveled further from home visiting more war-torn nations than perhaps any other American poet writing today. In this, her second volume of poems, we witness the aftermath of civil war in Bosnia, the all-but-extinct Jewish community of Dublin, and meet a man living for over a decade in a Paris airport.

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From Poetry Daily

From the boldly erotic to the elegiac - Susan Rich gives us a collection of poems sensual yet exact in their language, generous in the range and power of their emotion."

“**J. M. Coetzee**

Her poetry is an exuberant exploration of a life in love and in longing: tilt-a-whirls, pineapple rings, and small cartons of milk alert us to enlivened possibilities of nostalgia and desire.

“

Aimee Nezhukumatathil

Rich's gorgeous poems affix moments, both magnificent and minute. And in exquisite and playful poems, a pageant of a life in process develops before our eyes.

“

Oliver de la Paz

AUTHOR Q & A

Here are a few suggested interview questions:

- In your poems and cover art, you often focus on women artists specifically the surrealist artists Leonora Carrington, Kati Horna, and Remedios Varo. How do these artists influence your poetry?
- Could you speak about how "One Day I Will Love Susan Rich" developed?
- Do you find an overlap of ideas and concerns running through your selected work?
- How has the poetry landscape changed over the 20+ years you've been publishing?
- What themes or images do you constantly find yourself returning to?
- How do you think about audience?
- What advice do you have for emerging poets?
- Where do you find inspiration?
- How has the pandemic affected your writing life and productivity?
- What misconceptions do people have about your artistic work?
- When did words first start attracting you or when did you fall in love with poetry?
- What non-literary pursuits do you engage in that you feel help make you a better writer?
- Do you have another project in the works? If so, what is it?

