



And (American Poets Continuum)

Michael Blumenthal

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Through Michael Blumenthal's eyes we gain a renewed, childlike wonder at everything from plants, trees, and relationships to the most fundamental word in our vocabulary: AND. Blumenthal uses the conjunction to unify this collection and create a chanting, sonorous rhythm to his work. The result is a book of poems-as-hymns-and-praises.

Michael Blumenthal holds the Mina Hohenberg Darden Endowed Chair in Creative Writing at Old Dominion University. His other books include the memoir *All My Mothers and Fathers* (HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), and the poetry collection *Dusty Angel* (BOA Editions, Ltd., 1999), for which he was awarded the Isabella Gardner Poetry Award.

Blumenthal's new collection of poems, titled "And," is the closest that the stoicism of Ecclesiastes will come to getting a 21st-century makeover. In it, there's a time to laugh and cry, scatter stones and gather them up, and all the rest. There's no point, though, in toil and hope beyond that. After reading these poems, which are designed with a cosmic sweep, you get the feeling that Blumenthal's plan is, as in Dylan Thomas's poem, eventually just to go gentle into that good night: "Rage, rage against the dying of the light" be damned.

--THE JEWISH DAILY FORWARD

Michael Blumenthal's stunning new book, *And*, is an Eliotic celebration of life in the world as continuum and progress. He achieves this through a simple and seductive meditation upon the conjunction, "and," and the way it enriches the complexity of language as it shapes lived experience.

--The Montserrat Review

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