



Speaking to You: Contemporary Poetry and Public Address

Natalie Pollard

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Speaking to You examines our pleasures in, accounts of, and uses for British poetry today. It explores the work of four important poets writing post-1960--Don Paterson, Geoffrey Hill, W.S. Graham, and C.H. Sissons--in order to show how contemporary British poetry's creative handling of addresses to 'you' are key in its interactions with readers, critics, lovers, editors, fellow poets, and deceased forebears.

The book lays out clearly, in four sections that focus on individual writers, how saying 'you' operates in contemporary poetry. It shows how lyric address is bound up with poetry's ability to delight, move and tease its public. It puts address into dialogue with a range of familiar literary figures across the ages - namely specific Modernist, Romantic, early Modern, and Classical poets - that will be familiar to scholars and ordinary readers alike.

From John Donne to Carol Ann Duffy, T.S. Eliot to Philip Larkin, Keats to Tony Harrison, address has been key in constructing political and personal identities. This book argues that, for contemporary poets - like that of these canonical writers - address is persuasive public interlocution; demanding 'you' rethink regional and historical allegiances.

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