

Fire to Fire: New and Selected Poems

By Mark Doty

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Mark Doty's *Fire to Fire* collects the best of his seven books of poetry, along with a generous selection of new work. His signature style encompasses both the plainspoken and the artfully wrought, as one of contemporary American poetry's most lauded, recognizable voices speaks to the crises and possibilities of our time.

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Fire to Fire: New and Selected Poems By Mark Doty Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
Signature*Reviewed by* Reginald ShepherdDoty's first book, *Turtle, Swan*, appeared in 1987. He has published six books of poetry and four memoirs, all excellent, since. This hefty selection from his seven collections, plus a generous sheaf of new poems, should solidify his position as a star of contemporary American poetry. Doty's poetic career really took off with *My Alexandria* (1993), his third book, which made his reputation. *Fire to Fire* contains only two poems from his first two books—Adonis Theatre, about an old movie palace turned gay porno theater, and The Death of Antinous, about the Roman emperor Hadrian's lover's afterlife in statuary, both of which are meditations on representation, absence and desire. Desire, and its capacity to transform and transfigure, is one of Doty's main themes. Enough desire (so often mixed, as T.S. Eliot wrote, with memory) can make us as beautiful as the objects of our desire. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Doty has never eschewed beauty. Indeed, beauty, its unlikely, often unexpected, yet constant recurrence and its elusive fleetingness, is central, as demonstrated by several new poems titled Theory of Beauty, each with a parenthetical specific occasion. Beauty is found everywhere in Doty's poems, in a band playing cast-off chemical drums in Times Square, even in Chet Baker falling from an Amsterdam hotel window: a blur of buds//breathing in the lindens/and you let go and why not.The title poem Fire to Fire, from *School of the Arts* (2005) is a gorgeous meditation on the way that life's fire infuses the world, in sunflowers, goldfinches, and even a neighbor's puppy: fire longs to meet itself/flaring, longing wants a multiplicity of faces,//branching and branching out. The selections from The Vault (which really needs to be read in its entirety) reveal the poetry in men meeting other men's bodies in a sex club, incorporating references to the Middle English poem Western Wind and to James Wright's A Blessing, and including a subtle revision of Rilke's Orpheus. Eurydice. Hermes in which the men are deep in the club's mine of souls, that shaft where inner and outer//grow indissoluble. At times the poems unnecessarily explain what their vivid images and striking phrases makes clear, but the commitment to the particular, and to its possibilities, is unwavering. As Doty writes in Ararat, Any small thing can save you. The poems combine close attention to the fragile, contingent things of the world with the constant, almost unavoidable chance of transcendence, since desire can make anything into a god.*Reginald Shepherd's most recent books are* Fata Morgana, *poems, and the just-published* Orpheus in the Bronx, *prose on poetry*.
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From Booklist
The word that keeps leaping to mind, as you read through this gratifyingly thick collection of poems, is fluent. Doty’s facility with his chosen form—usually unrhymed stanzas of two, three, and four lines each, the meter floating between three beats and four—is so natural that the craft in his work is all but invisible; he makes the damnably difficult look deceptively simple. This impression of ease may also have something to do with the sense that Doty has found some breathing room, in his work and his private life. His death-haunted poems from earlier books about the age of AIDS—“an acronym, a vacant / four-letter cipher / that draws meanings into itself, / reconstitutes the world”—give way here to recent poems about a more hopeful life with new friends, new vistas, new narratives, all rendered in a way that feels at once confessional and universal. Not that death’s irrelevant—ghosts and apparitions, such as spotting John Berryman having lunch in a diner in Chelsea, still make regular appearances—but the poet has made his peace with it. --Kevin Nance

Review
“Mark Doty still finds wonder in a world of confusion and hardships...a much-needed book of new and selected older poems by Doty.”

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mary Deemer:

Why don't make it to be your habit? Right now, try to ready your time to do the important behave, like looking for your favorite publication and reading a guide. Beside you can solve your long lasting problem; you can add your knowledge by the reserve entitled Fire to Fire: New and Selected Poems. Try to make book Fire to Fire: New and Selected Poems as your buddy. It means that it can to get your friend when you experience alone and beside that of course make you smarter than previously. Yeah, it is very fortuned in your case. The book makes you considerably more confidence because you can know everything by the book. So , let me make new experience along with knowledge with this book.

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Naomi Taylor:

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Elizabeth Schwartz:

In this particular era which is the greater man or who has ability to do something more are more precious than other. Do you want to become one among it? It is just simple way to have that. What you should do is just spending your time little but quite enough to experience a look at some books. One of many books in the top checklist in your reading list is actually Fire to Fire: New and Selected Poems. This book and that is qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in turning into precious person. By looking upward and review this reserve you can get many advantages.

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