

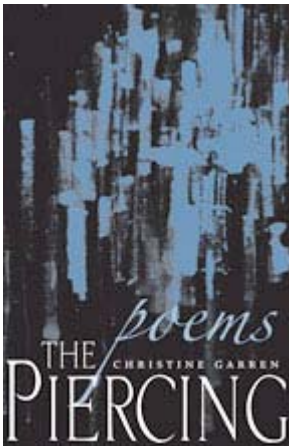


Christine Garren

The Piercing: Poems, by Christine Garren

(Baton Rouge, LA: [Louisiana State University Press](#), 2006)

I'll start out by admitting that I am Christy's husband and by also reassuring you that in spite of our union all that I say here is true. Christy's poems are original and powerful. They have an open quality that borders on the spiritual. Their high quality rests in Christy's natural ease with imagery that in her hands is frequently startling. She is like her poems in one undeniable way—she is distinctly introverted.



Regardless of (or perhaps because of) the introversion, she is able to be bold in her work that is never formulaic. On a more personal note I can tell you that when I first met her she was reading Turgenev's *A Sportsman Sketches*. She is an excellent swimmer. She loves to grow flowers. She is also an excellent cook. She spends most of her waking and non-waking life creating something. Her notebooks are never ever neat. They look like storms have hit. —Sam Garren

Sam Garren attended Davidson College and Louisiana State University, where he received his Ph.D. in 20th Century American literature. He is full professor at North Carolina A&T State University and coordinator of graduate studies for the English department.

February Snow

The roofs were snow covered, the powders blown across
the tree-limbs' cross-hatch.
In the parking lot below a person's cell phone rings, clearly
like the bells of a church.
Sometimes it is beautiful, in some of the minutes
then ordinary again—
white dust on the tree-limbs and power lines—and on the attics.
The birds sleep.
In every room I walk the snow falls beyond the black glass—
isn't that how it was in the beginning, throughout the rooms, that feeling
of air in the midst of burial.

The Piercing

Small piercing as if in an earlobe
your leaving caused. Air is filling it now, time fills it
the view through these windows fills the tiny hole.
The people on the street, the manic father
the other father carrying his child in pink—this
millimeter's-width opening is for a decade to fit through.
Look, there you go. There I go—there our landscape goes as if
through a fantastical roof's hole, the shingle pulled off, the nail off—
our death is
flying over the city.

Afternoon

We kept waiting by the pond in the afternoon. The blades of grass
leading to the round liquid were bright. You could see our travel,
where we had pressed the grass down into a mat. In the distance
a curved row of grey timbers stood
and from them now and then the birds lifted
while the water moved towards us in small repeated panels.
No one was near. Not a road or house. I took your small hand in my own
and imagined the life I could not see,
the hidden organisms responding to your thrown stone
that sweeps now through my chest.

The Piercing is Christy Garren's third book of poems. In addition to its arrival, she has new poems in the current issue of Poetry. She has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the North Carolina Arts Council and has been a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Award in poetry. In 2000, she was Kenan Visiting Writer at the University of North Carolina. She earned her MFA in creative writing from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and although she was born in Philadelphia, she has lived in the South since she was six years old. Her poems have appeared in Chicago Review, Harvard Review, TriQuarterly, Gettysburg Review, The Southern Review, Fence, Shenandoah, Agni. The poems that appear here are reprinted by permission of Louisiana State University Press from The Piercing: Poems by Christine Garren, Copyright © 2006 Christine Garren.