



# **Poetry and Poetics after Wallace Stevens**

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As the figure of Wallace Stevens (1879-1955) becomes so entrenched in the Modernist canon that he serves as a major reference point for poets and critics alike, the time has come to investigate poetry and poetics after him. The ambiguity of the preposition is intentional: while *after* may refer neutrally to chronological sequence, it also implies ways of aesthetically modeling poetry on a predecessor. Likewise, the general heading of *poetry and poetics* allows the sixteen contributors to this volume to range far and wide in terms of poetics (from postwar formalists to poets associated with various strands of Postmodernism, Language poetry, even Confessional poetry), ethnic identities (with a diverse selection of poets of color), nationalities (including the Irish Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney and several English poets), or language (sidestepping into French and Czech poetry).

Besides offering a rich harvest of concrete case studies, *Poetry and Poetics after Wallace Stevens* also reconsiders possibilities for talking about poetic influence. How can we define and refine the ways in which we establish links between earlier and later poems? At what level of abstraction do such links exist? What have we learned from debates about competing poetic eras and traditions? How is our understanding of an older writer reshaped by engaging with later ones? And what are we perhaps *not* paying attention to-aesthetically, but also politically, historically, thematically-when we relate contemporary poetry to someone as idiosyncratic as Stevens?



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