

TOM SLEIGH

POET | ESSAYIST

PRESS KIT

ABOUT

www.tomsleigh.com

Tom Sleigh is the author of eleven books of poetry, including his most recent book, *The King's Touch*, winner of the Paterson Poetry Prize and published by Graywolf Press in February 2022. His collection, *Army Cats*, was the winner of the John Updike Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and *Space Walk* won the \$100,000 Kingsley Tufts Award. In addition, *Far Side of the Earth* won an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, *The Dreamhouse* was a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Award, and *The Chain* was a finalist for the Lenore Marshall Prize. *Station Zed* was published in 2015 and includes Sleigh's long poem about Iraq, "Homage to Bashō," a version of which received *Poetry Magazine's* Editors Prize. In 2018 a book of prose collecting his essays on refugees in the Middle East and Africa, *The Land Between Two Rivers: Writing In An Age Of Refugees*, was published simultaneously by Graywolf Press as a companion piece to *House of Fact, House of Ruin*. Sleigh has also published a previous book of essays, *Interview With a Ghost*, and a translation of Euripides' *Herakles*. Widely anthologized, his poems and prose appear in *The New Yorker*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, *The Village Voice*, *Yale Review*, *The Threepenny Review*, and other literary magazines, as well as *The Best of the Best American Poetry*, *The Best American Poetry*, *Best American Travel Writing*, and *The Pushcart Anthology*. He has received the Shelley Prize from the Poetry Society of America, a Fellowship from the American Academy in Berlin, a Fellowship at the Civitella Ranieri Foundation, an Individual Writer's Award from the Lila Wallace/Reader's Digest Fund, a Guggenheim grant, and two National Endowment for the Arts grants, among many others.

Sleigh is a Distinguished Professor in the MFA Program at Hunter College and lives in Brooklyn, New York. During the last decade, he has also worked as a journalist in Syria, Lebanon, Somalia, Kenya, Iraq, and Libya.

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DOWNLOAD AUTHOR PHOTOS

POET AS JOURNALIST

Author Note

I started writing about refugees back in 2007, when I was asked to go to Lebanon and Syria after the 2006 Israeli-Lebanese War to write about Palestinian refugees. I didn't anticipate violence, but the moment my plane touched down in Beirut, a mini-civil war broke out when a huge car bomb exploded in the ABC Shopping Mall. I remember traveling to Qana in southern Lebanon where the young man who took me there was one of the first members of the Red Cross allowed into the village after a bombing. In the smoke and semi-darkness, he came across a little girl buried up to her neck in rubble. So he dug down with his bare hands as far as her arm pits, took hold of her under her arms, lifted her free—and discovered she'd been blown in half. He looked as if he were about to tear up. I told him he didn't have to go on with his story, but he looked me in the eye, and said: "I'll tell you what happened, but you must promise to tell my story." I'd never felt such a sense of responsibility, almost a kind of commission, in all my life.

As to how a cultural outsider can tell the story, that's a different question. One thing I think is crucial, though, is to find a way to acknowledge the limits of what you can know, and to be honest about what it is you don't know. So I try as hard as I can to avoid broad strokes in favor of the small picture, the local details and intimate truths that make up daily life. It can take me several years, and several visits, before I feel like a place has imprinted on my nervous system. Only then can I write about it convincingly, at least for myself.

I guess you could say I live a split screen existence: in one half of the screen, I watch myself hassling with the phone company over an unpaid bill, while in the other half I watch a Lebanese army tank mechanic on his back in the dirt reaching up inside his tank, gently rapping with his wrench, while the tank talks back in little pings and clangs. Or, I'm seeing Mogadishu, the green sea, red earth, and half destroyed cathedral, its ceiling caved in, glass blown out of the rose window, but the walls still soaring upward. Or maybe I'm watching young men cross a bridge over the Tigris and Euphrates River in Baghdad, their tight black jeans, razor cut side-burns and long curls on the knife edge of "emo" fashion—which so enraged religious conservatives back in 2012 that some of them were stoned to death.

At the deepest level—and I have a hunch this is the same wellspring that the poems come from—my need to see things concretely is a way of cutting through the haze of media-spawned fantasies. I used to feel like I lived in a hell of abstractions, of canned images, of jabbering, competing ideologies. What journalism and poetry have done for me is to help ground my experience in what Seamus Heaney once called "the primal reach of the physical."

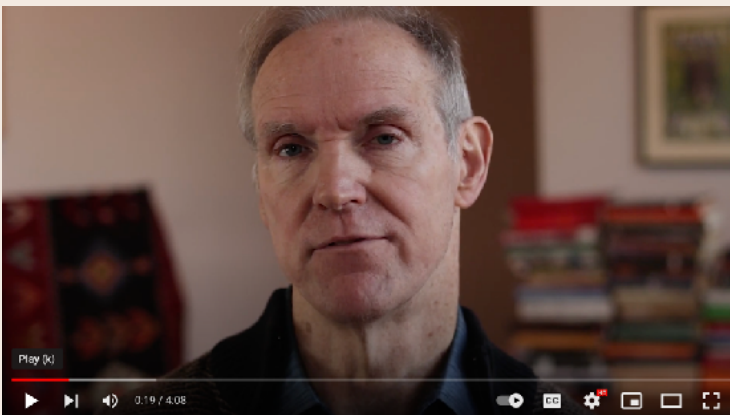
WATCH & LISTEN



Age of Wonder: Poems from
The King's Touch
with filmmaker Ed Robbins



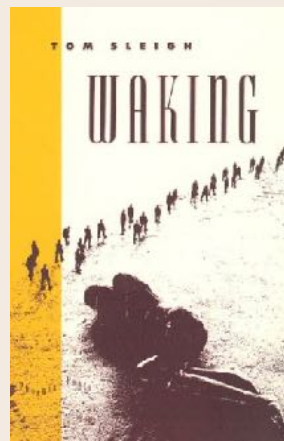
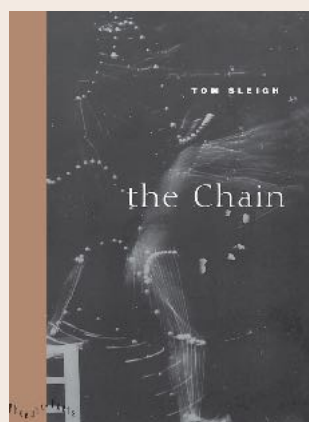
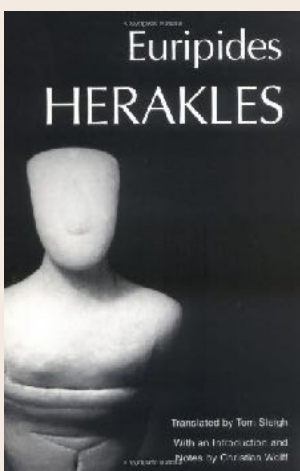
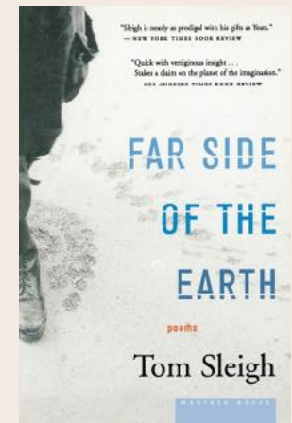
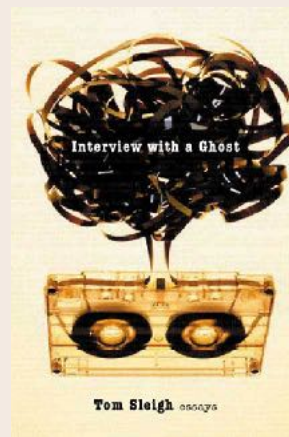
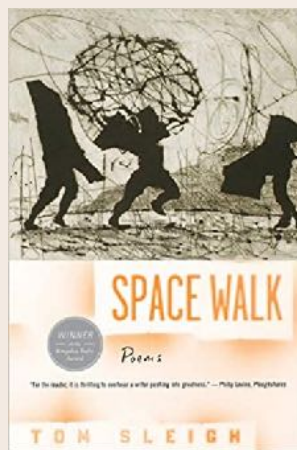
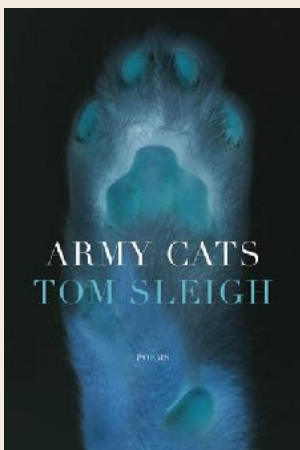
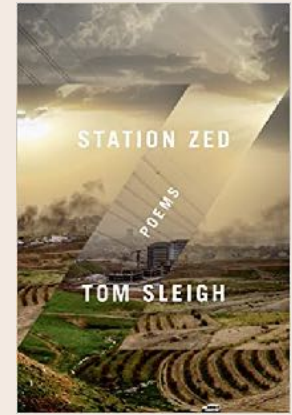
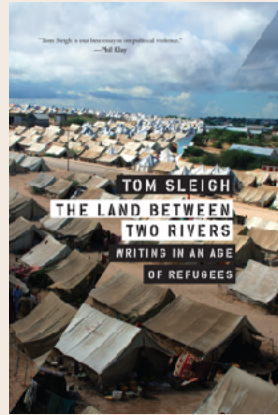
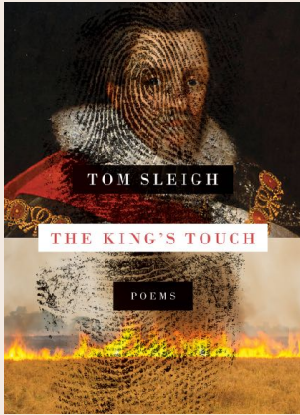
Academy of American Poets
P.O.P Series



Poem-A-Day, "Youth"

▶ KUCI-FM Interview with Marrie Stone, February 2018: [LISTEN HERE](#)

BOOKS BY TOM SLEIGH



PRAISE FOR TOM SLEIGH'S WRITING

THE KING'S TOUCH (2022)

Winner of the Paterson Poetry Prize

"Generous, meticulous, haunted and grounded, *The King's Touch* handles contemporary life with alertness and compassion for a world in which 'A Man Plays Debussy for a Blind, Eighty-Four-Year-Old Female Elephant' while friends kill themselves and voices urge, 'You're better off dead, you useless piece of shit.' The piano player 'shuts his eyes and leans his forehead against hers,' Sleigh imagines; 'it's like each one's/listening to what the other one's thinking.' Sleigh's business, like Dickinson's, is circumference; though he can't erase the voices that drive individuals and nations mad, they can be subsumed in music. Reading *The King's Touch* is an extraordinary pleasure not to be missed." —Joyce Peseroff, *Arrowsmith Press*

"The conflict poems (for lack of a better term) are invariably gripping, especially when they involve the speaker learning how to use a rocket-propelled grenade, as in 'Practice Range.' And, as if an *RPG poem* isn't heavy enough on its own, Sleigh's decision to reveal, via a note below the poem's title, that 'Practice Range' takes place in Erbil, Kurdistan lends the poem additional significance...In *The King's Touch*, Sleigh excels at seeing and interpreting the world as it is, on its own merits. It's a fine addition to his ever-longer body of work." —Kevin O'Rourke, *Michigan Quarterly Review*

THE LAND BETWEEN TWO RIVERS: WRITING IN AN AGE OF REFUGEES (2018)

"His stories from these war-torn places are sharply observed and humane, whether he is recording descriptions of what it is like to be processed into the massive refugee camp at Dadaab, Kenya, or to work in a sweets shop in Amman, Jordan, or relaying his own experience of watching a severely malnourished child become alert after eating a nutritional wafer in Mogadishu. But these stories are only one part of his project, which is to articulate how it is that poetry can capture what Seamus Heaney calls 'the music of what happens,' the essence of direct lived experience. The second half of the book is a remarkable critical memoir, in which Sleigh writes perceptively about some of his poet heroes, including David Jones, Anna Akhmatova, and, most prominently, his lifelong friend Heaney. What emerges is a uniquely personal take on the responsibilities of the poet and the potential for language to be 'a form of care.'" —*Publishers Weekly*, Starred Review

"Sleigh is a deliberate traveler in the troubled world...In Sleigh's hands these moments of ongoingness mix something of the daily with something of the miraculous...Like Whitman, Sleigh here plays with what the observer's notebook can become. He embeds lines of poetry in journalistic essays like a rogue reporter; he'll forge a sonnet or rhymed tercets out of reported language... Sleigh's cross-pollinating forms remind us that language, too, is always being deployed to some

"Sleigh, a poet and a journalist who has reported from Africa and the Middle East (the region once called Mesopotamia or 'the land between two rivers'), offers essays with rare insight. He writes of his first assignment in Qana, a village south of Beirut where 28 Lebanese civilians were killed during the 2006 war with Israel. He writes of Syria, Jordan, Kenya, Somalia, and concludes with a remarkable appreciation of Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney, his poet friend, who, through the Troubles in Northern Ireland, became 'finely tuned' to impending violence." —Jane Ciabattari, *BBC Culture*

HOUSE OF FACT, HOUSE OF RUIN (2018)

"I'm reading *House of Fact, House of Ruin*, by Tom Sleigh. In these poems Tom Sleigh draws on his experience working as a journalist in the Middle East and Africa, confronting various forms of trauma without averting his gaze. His complex, disturbing vision and poetic mastery make this book an arresting read." —Arthur Sze, *The New York Times*

"The poems of Sleigh's generous new collection are placed in two parts of three sections each... Sleigh has been to the places and talked with the people of his poems—which aren't all about conflict but include penetrating elegies, autobiographical bits, ruminations about animals, and more—and he knows the literary bases of the West well, especially Homer and the sonnet (a customary form for him, customarily half-rhymed). Thus informed, his poems range centuries and plumb the mysteries of human inconsistency with haunting forcefulness." —Ray Olsen, *Booklist*

"Sleigh reveals that 'fact' and 'ruin' are the same, as much as we'd like to believe our little mortality is a real commodity. He takes meaning to its extreme, pushing logic to become philosophy—taking the rough stuff of this earth, rolling it around in his hands and then letting us know just what it's worth...Poetry is Sleigh's task here and he's one of a handful of writers today upholding the brightest part of our canon...Sleigh makes poetry go beyond itself. Like Wallace Stevens there's an imperative beneath the line, words as a consequence of fine-grained thought. The complexities of experience can only be written with complexity, but the fundamental gift of craft makes poetry responsive to the world and allows the reader to respond in kind. He couldn't do this without clarity and irony, making the consequential burdens of life beautiful things." —Grace Cavalieri, *Washington Independent Review of Books*

STATION ZED (2015)

"...Sleigh (*Army Cats*) seamlessly and imaginatively weaves together history, mythology, and autobiography to form a collection that feels personal and prophetic. Poems such as 'KM4,' which finds the speaker in Somalia after a suicide bombing, question how to translate the trauma of war and explore ways in which the dead stay with us: 'the body makes itself known before it becomes unknown.' The long poem 'Homage to Bashō' consists of a series of variations on *haibun*, with traditional Western forms following the prose blocks instead of haiku. In it Sleigh revisits both Iraq wars through his experience as a reporter, including interactions with a security contractor, a student whose brother was a suicide bomber, and even his own poetry. Although told through the filter of Sleigh's perspective, these stories present complex accounts challenging both speaker and reader to question the moral lines of war...Sleigh never fails to produce beautiful lines: 'though just by shutting my eyes I can make the sun fall.' Narrative and wandering, Sleigh's poems welcome readers ready to venture into the unknown." —*Publishers Weekly*

“The poems’ witnessing doesn’t only reiterate reportage; rather it accelerates to where extremity and the poetic combine. Here is a witnessing self full of shock, full of outrage, but also full of wonder and eloquence driving profound poetry. Sleigh’s protean style has, over the years, held itself to ever higher ambitions, a creative restlessness combining scholarship and fierce wit in poems, essays and apt translations, along with signature skeptical music.” –Carol Muske-Dukes, *Los Angeles Times Book Review*

“Tom Sleigh lures readers beyond familiar borders so deftly that most won’t recall how they entered various conflicts or major war zones. Instead, fans will notice Sleigh’s ability to craft compelling narratives with his pied-piper voice...He also dips into history, mythology and literature as the poems point, again and again, to the inescapable intersection of personal and political concerns. Sleigh’s work as a journalist shapes the heart of this collection as he travels to Lebanon, Iraq, Somalia and other war-torn countries to report on violence and suffering that most people don’t want to think about. In ‘Homage to Bashō,’ a moving vignette illustrates the humanity of a suicide bomber whose sister becomes one of Sleigh’s writing students. ‘Station Zed,’ named after the execution site in a Nazi prison camp outside Berlin, pushes readers into the unknown time after time. Even benign situations, such as the speaker addressing his stepdaughter, feel gritty and challenging.” –Elizabeth Lund, *The Washington Post*

ARMY CATS (2011)

Winner of the John Updike Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters

“All those things we’d rather not hear about—war, disease, physical and moral corruption, the nightmare of family, the beauty and heartbreak of love—we hear about in the poems, plays, and essays of Tom Sleigh. The wonder of his work is that no matter the subject, the writing is singular, finished, and...impossible to ignore. In the midst of the mess we have made of the world, his voice is calm, measured, intelligent, and at times even playful; he is becoming our Jonathan Swift.” –J.D. McClatchy, Citation for the John Updike Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters

“[In] *Army Cats*...this alertness to the complexity of experience propels [Sleigh] into new, exciting terrain...the book registers Sleigh’s capacious and quirky mind as it investigates various kinds of self-making...Sleigh undermines or interrogates the lyricism that propels these poems until the truths that he arrives at feel solid and real. His voice is trustworthy and at the same time unexpected—a perfect combination of effects that often left me, for one, happily quizzical and eager to reread...*Army Cats* is a dynamic book in which Sleigh sets down his own wrestling with identity, and we are captivated by the multiplicity of selves that emerges. His thematic obsessions culminate in one of the last and most breathtaking poems, ‘Orders of Daylight,’ which posits a theory of the self as permeable or translucent.” –Mira Rosenthal, *The Kenyon Review*

“...Sleigh has been publishing formidable poetry for almost thirty years, and among American poets of his generation there is no one better. He has arrived at this status in no small measure because few of his generational peers have been as willing to so successfully address large and abiding subjects as well as intensely personal ones. And that he accomplishes all this with a seething clarity of vision that never lapses into grandiosity makes his accomplishment all the more noteworthy. At the end of her *Iliad* essay, Weil compares the pitiless spirit of Homer’s depictions of warfare to the message of the Gospels. But Weil’s conception of piety is one of exceptional rigor,

involving the most difficult of reckonings, and the most hard-won consolations. Art, too—at least the art that is apt to endure—cannot offer easy reckonings or tidy consolations, either. ‘Nothing is so rare as to see misfortune fairly portrayed,’ Weil notes. Tom Sleigh understands this concept as well, and thus *Army Cats* is nothing less than a triumph.” —David Wojahn, *Tikkun*

SPACE WALK (2008)

Winner of the Kingsley Tufts Award

“Sleigh’s reviewers use words such as ‘adept,’ ‘elegant,’ and ‘classical.’ Reading his new book, I find all those terms beside the point, even though not one is inaccurate. I am struck by the human dramas that are enacted in these poems, the deep encounters that often shatter the participants and occasionally restore them. What delights me most is seeing a poet of his accomplishments and his large and well-earned reputation suddenly veer into a new arena of both our daily and our mythical lives. For the writer, such daring may be its own reward; for the reader, it is thrilling to overhear a writer pushing into greatness.” —Philip Levine, *Ploughshares*

“Sleigh (*The Far Side of the Earth*) has slowly, and justly, won a reputation for his clean-lined, sinewy poems about tough men, wounded bodies and all the forms of strength—intellectual, moral, aural, physical, emotional. His seventh book of verse...may be his saddest and most humane. Stanzas about Homeric violence, and about its modern counterparts, frame understated, nearly tearful depictions of troubled lovers (gay and straight), grieving survivors and the last days of the poet’s father, ‘moving with the clumsy gestures/ Of a man in a space suit—the strangeness of death/ Moving among the living.’ A Gerhardt Richter painting conjures reincarnations of Hercules, compelled by mean gods to ‘the fate he must fulfill, slaughtering/ with his club whatever comes into his way’; drag shows suggest obituaries; radio broadcasts look forward to the Earth’s end; and the Middle East, ancient and modern, echoes with emblems of oblivion: ‘We will be covered by the dune,/ and uncovered in time.’ Body and mind, for Sleigh, must die together, and their mutual sadness, incomprehension and struggle generates each poem. This serious focus, the well-managed ancient Greek analogues and the wrung-out credibility of the best stanzas belong to nobody but Sleigh.” —*Publishers Weekly*

“Sleigh’s [work] is among the most full-bodied, expansive verse being written in America today...Sleigh’s latest collection, *Space Walk*, is a continuation of the important work in his book just previous, *Far Side of the Earth*...The arc of memory and the haunting of the departed are indelible marks. I trust only a handful of poets to write about ghosts—Heaney, Merrill, Sleigh...top my list. Sleigh’s hard-earned knowledge of the *nekuia*—‘Where is the zone, // Imperishable, I must enter?’ shows through in the almost-gossamer strangeness of his vision...[as] In ‘Oracle,’ perhaps the strongest elegy for a parent I’ve read in recent years.” —Douglas Basford, *The Hopkins Review*

INTERVIEW WITH A GHOST (2006)

“What is the meaning of ‘I’ in poetry? In his first collection of prose, poet Sleigh (*Far Side of the Earth*), who teaches in the graduate writing program at Hunter College, delves into this issue by viewing the writing process from a variety of angles. In the title essay, it is unclear whether Sleigh is the Ghost, the Interviewer, both, or neither. He follows with autobiographical essays discussing his drug use, his incurable blood illness, and his family, all of which has influenced his writing. In the

second part of the book, he attacks the idea of an easily knowable first-person narrator, showing how even an ostensibly confessional writer like Robert Lowell shapes and edits the self that is presented to readers. Finally, Sleigh discusses the work of other poets, some overtly confessional, others who tend to conceal themselves. In this readable and absorbing work, he does what any good poetry critic should do—he makes the reader want to read more poetry. Highly recommended for all literature collections.” —*Library Journal*

“In dense and formally playful essays, poet Sleigh (*Far Side of the Earth*) explores how ‘private life, historical circumstance, and art converge’ and ‘what it means to say “I” in a poem, in all its psychological, historical, political, and aesthetic ramifications.’ In his opening essay Sleigh draws on his own experiences of bodily wasting and brushes with death (he has a chronic blood disease) to read between the lines of Plato’s *Phaedo*. Another autobiographical essay reflects on his parents’ East Texas drive-in movie theater while analyzing the relationship between technological and poetical thinking; here Sleigh invokes Heidegger, Auden, Lowell and Yeats and recalls memories of his father hooked to a dialysis machine, en route to striking insights into technology, magic and the divine...To richly suggestive effect, Sleigh combines child psychologist D.W. Winnicott’s ideas about infantile absorption in play and T.S. Eliot’s theories of ‘impersonality’ to comment on the act of poetic communication.” —*Publishers Weekly*

FAR SIDE OF THE EARTH (2003)

Winner of the Academy Award in Poetry from the American Academy of Arts and Letters

“Tom Sleigh's poetry is hard-earned and well-founded. I greatly admire the way it refuses to cut emotional corners and yet achieves a sense of lyric absolution.” —*Seamus Heaney*

“Always learned and formally adept, Sleigh, in his fifth collection, revs both diction and syntax to produce his best work yet...A sequence of poems about September 11 asserts the importance of poetry itself.” —*The New Yorker*

“Tom Sleigh’s new book...rooted in pentameter (for which he has an excellent feel) and...classical balance...holds everything together by matching his intense emotion with skillfully worked out metaphors.” —*The New York Times Book Review*

THE DREAMHOUSE (1999)

**Winner of the Shelley Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America
Finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Award**

“During a cultural period in which many artists have seemed inhibited or enthralled by fashionable academic ideologies, Tom Sleigh has persisted in exploring the dominant human themes—death, religion, suffering, love—with impressive resourcefulness and candor. This alone is enough to qualify him as an indispensable contemporary American poet; he does real work in his writing, the work of renewing the nexus of images that link the literal, visible world with the visionary, subtle ones that ordinarily pass by unnoticed and unspoken...Sleigh writes with an unswerving attention to a complex core of dark or obscure emotions—the combination of clarity and enigma that makes poetry memorable, disturbing, and transformative.” —*Andrew Frisardi, Boston Sunday Globe*

"Sleigh works that strip of thought between believing and its opposite, and if faith can't do the transfiguring, then poetry will. Formally, Sleigh uses design to speed things up...For subjects he favors Heracles, Hephaestos, Charon: in other words, no one from Mount Olympus' ruling class but the fleshy old strugglers who complained about their labors yet undertook them ceaselessly. There is a weary expeditious muscularity to these poems; when the sun appears, it is like a blazing Marvel Comics superhero...who scorches everything and moves on. The flat titles...are like plain wooden trapdoors over the underworld: lift any one of them and one sullen deity or another will clamber up and shake you until you see stars." —David Kirby, *The New York Times Book Review*

"*The Dreamhouse*...negotiates a fragile truce between the contrarities of embodiment and absence, a fugitive classical world and a tarnished contemporary one, and the aesthetic impulses toward both form and wildness. It is a book of scope and delicacy...Sleigh's technical skill and unrestrained energy of mind make categories like 'open' and 'closed' forms seem inadequate to the task of criticism...He has opened up an elegiac space in which meditation is stained with the coloration of grieving, where embodiment hovers in the wings of disappearance." —Srikanth Reddy, *Boston Book Review*

THE CHAIN (1996)

Finalist for Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize

"Through sheer artistry, Tom Sleigh manages to write...in a transcendent way, and without appeal to the metaphysical assumptions transcendence usually requires. *The Chain*...floods darkness with brilliant craft." —Gray Jacobik, *Boston Globe*

"In his third book of poems Tom Sleigh achieves a new height for his own considerable art, rich in linguistic pliability and invention, myth and history. It is a style at once accessible, verbally muscular, musically engaging, and cathartic; and it is helping to keep open and alive an idiom in American poetry for speaking about our deepest and most human experiences." —Josh Weiner, *Boston Book Review*

"...Sleigh's writing, always lean and spare, seems carved in stone like an ancient alphabet...*The Chain* is a superb, astonishing book—one of the best I have read in years, rich in poems that deserve to be widely anthologized..." —Susan Mitchell, *Agni*

WAKING (1990)

Finalist for the James Laughlin Award (formerly the Lamont Poetry Prize)

Finalist for the William Carlos Williams Award

"Tom Sleigh's precision marks him as the diamond cutter of poetry; his verse has a tense musicality, and his ability to convey exact emotions, even the state of consciousness itself, is unerring." —Best Books of the Year, *The New York Times Book Review*

"*Waking* is unflinchingly one of the important dark books of time." —Susan Stewart, *American Poetry Review*

"Tom Sleigh's second book of poems, *Waking*, is so fine one can hardly do justice to it in a review... The poet is at ease both in and out of forms, and there is a tense muscularity in his music...Mr. Sleigh is nearly as prodigal with his gifts as Yeats." –Liz Rosenberg, *The New York Times Book Review*

AFTER ONE (1983)

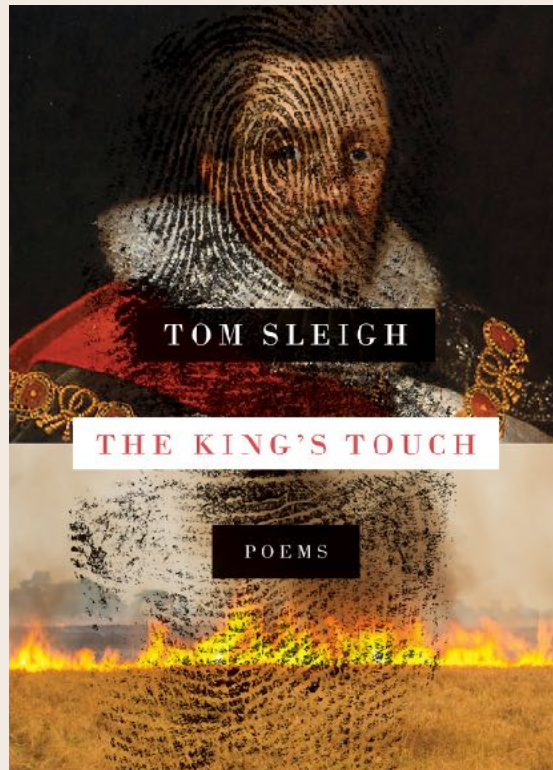
Winner of the Houghton Mifflin New Poetry Series Prize

"It is a pleasure...to come upon Tom Sleigh's first book, *After One*, in which the musical intricacy of its varied forms corresponds to the precision of emotion and observation...Mr. Sleigh's poetry engages the self just as it engages the physical world that is there to be marveled at, enjoyed and lost. In language that is rhythmic, spare and lucid, he rewards his readers with poems genuinely designed with what Frost called 'a good look and a good listen.'" –Robert Pack, *The New York Times Book Review*

"In *After One* Sleigh does not allow for convenient distinctions between distance and intimacy, or between formal dazzle and intense emotion. The beating human heart that is evoked in these pages is a source of both rhythm and savagery." –Robert Polito, *The Boston Phoenix*

FEBRUARY 1, 2022

THE KING'S TOUCH



Winner of the Paterson Poetry Prize

Tom Sleigh's poems are skeptical of the inevitability of our fate, but in this brilliant new collection, they are charged with a powerful sense of premonition, as if the future is unfolding before us, demanding something greater than the self. Justice is a prevailing force, even while the poems are fully cognizant of the refugee crisis, war, famine, and the brutal reality of a crowded hospital morgue.

The King's Touch collides the world of fact with the world of mystery, but in a resolutely secular register. The title poem refers to the once-held belief that the king, as a divine representative, is imbued with the power of healing touch. Sleigh turns this encounter between illness and human contact toward his own chronic blood disease and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its mounting death tolls. One poem asks, "isn't it true that no matter how long you / wear them, masks don't grieve, only faces do?"

February 1, 2022, Poetry, 112 pages, 6.5 x 9, \$16.00, Trade Paperback (978-1-64445-077-2)
FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES: Marisa Atkinson | Graywolf Press [atkinson\(@\)graywolfpress.org](mailto:atkinson(@)graywolfpress.org)

ADDITIONAL INFO

EDUCATION

Johns Hopkins University, MA in Creative Writing
Evergreen State College, English, Romance Languages
California Institute of the Arts, English, Anthropology

SELECTED AWARDS

Paterson Poetry Prize, 2023
Dora Maar House, Brown Foundation Fellows Residence, 2010, 2022
Civitella Ranieri Center, Writing Fellowship, 2014
Inaugural John Updike Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, 2011
American Academy in Berlin, Writing Fellowship, 2011
Kingsley Tufts Award, 2008
Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, 2003
Boston Public Library, Literary Lights Award, 2000
Shelley Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America, 1999
Individual Writer's Award from the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, 1993-1996
Two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Poetry, 1987, 1994
John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship in Poetry, 1986
Ingram Merrill Foundation Grant, 1983-1984
Houghton Mifflin New Poetry Series Prize, 1982
Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Writing Fellowship, 1979-1980, 1981-1982
Finalist for the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize, The Los Angeles Times Book Award,
Lamont Poetry Prize, William Carlos Williams Award, among others.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

"Apology to My Daughter," *The Common*, Oct. 25, 2021
"A Dictator Walks Into a Bar," *The Common* (November 2021 Poetry Feature), Nov. 26, 2021
"Widows: Andromache/Hektor, Achilles/Patroclus" *Consequence Forum*, Winter 2021
"False Teeth," *The Threepenny Review*, Summer 2020
"Youth," Poem-a-Day, Academy of American Poets, March 16, 2019
"Not-Her," *The Progressive Magazine*, Jan. 24, 2019

"Stethoscope," *Poetry*, Nov. 2018

"The Fox," *The New Yorker*, Jan. 8, 2017

"Second Sight," first published in *The Threepenny Review*, reprinted from *Station Zed*, 2015

"Homage to Bashō," *Poetry*, March 2015 (published under the title, "Six Trees and Two White Dogs...Doves?")

"After Vallejo," *Poetry*, May 2014

"To be Incarnational," Essay, *Poetry*, Nov. 2013

"A Violent Prone, Poor People Zone," Essay, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, photos by Jason Florio, Winter 2012

"Homage to Mary Hamilton," *The New Yorker*, Dec. 12, 2010

"Army Cats," *The New Yorker*, Feb. 2, 2009

"The Deeds," Essay, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Summer 2008

"Beirut Tank," *Poetry*, June 2008

"Space Station," first published in *The Threepenny Review*, Academy of American Poets Website, 2005

"New York American Spell," from *Far Side of the Earth*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2003

PERFORMANCES

Lyric in Time of War with the American String Quartet: Lyric in Time of War combines the music of Bach, Shostakovich, Bartok, Sirota, Beethoven, and Barber with readings by Tom Sleigh. Since, 2015, Sleigh and ASQ have performed at universities and concert halls nationwide.

Ice Trucker Pilgrimage: A Libretto: Text for multimedia performance at the San Francisco Film Festival, 2006. The opera was performed at Roulette: New Music, New York City, April 2007; and in Ghent, Belgium, summer 2007, at an international festival for New Music.

Ahab's Wife, Produced by the American Repertory Theatre Institute, American Repertory Theatre of the Loeb Drama Center, Harvard University, March 1997; and The New Bedford Whaling Museum, July 1997. It was also featured at the Jim Henson International Festival of Puppet Theater in New York in September, 1998.

ARTISTS CATALOGS AND COLLABORATIONS

"And we call it wisdom..." Catalog Essay for Ron Baron's "Beyond-Beyond", Smack Mellon, Brooklyn, NY, Sept. 23, 2017.

"Vines, Weeds, and Blackbirds: Ellen Driscoll's Anti-Eden," Siena Art Institute, Siena, Italy, Spring 2016.

"The Souls," "Before Rain," included in Dialogues, 20 Poems and 36 Photographs, in collaboration with Rebecca Norris Web, 205-A Gallery, ed. Aaron Stern and Jordan Sullivan, NY, Jan. 2015. Reviewed in *The New York Times*, Sunday Styles Section, Feb. 26, 2015.

"No Hope, Just Imagination," Catalog for Ron Milewicz's "The Soul Exceeds its Circumstances," Elizabeth Harris Gallery, Sept. 5-Oct. 12, 2013.

"A Physical World: Catalog For Jenny Lynn McNutt's 'Zoopsia'", Art 101 Gallery, Williamsburg, NY, Fall 2012.

"Blue Print," artist book collaboration with Lesley Dill and Dieu Donn  Gallery, in association with George Adams Gallery, New York City, May 2014.

"Mike Mazur's The Black Paintings," catalog essay, Nielsen Gallery, Boston, MA Spring 2011.

"Notes from the Edge of the World: Ken Buhler's Drawings, 2008-2009," catalog essay, Lesley Heller Gallery, New York City, 2009.

"Hostas Are Hard: for Michael Mazur," Agni 70, Fall 2009.

"After the Reception," catalog poem, "Hard Rain: The Late Works of Mary Hambleton," ed. Tiffany Bell, Stewart Center Gallery, Purdue University, Fall 2009.

"For the Executive Director of the Fallen," artist book collaboration project Somewhere Far from Habit: The Poet and the Artist's Book, Kerri Cushman and Mary Carol-Hackett, traveling show originating at Pierre Menard Gallery, Cambridge, MA, Fall 2009.

"Recording," artist book collaboration with Nene Humphrey, Lesley Heller Gallery, New York City, Winter 2009.

"Revenant," artist book collaboration with Nathaniel Hester Editions, 2009.

"Sequins and Cardboard," catalog essay for Jillian Conrad, Real Art Ways, Hartford, Connecticut, 2007.

Catalog Essay for Jenny Lynn McNutt, 2005.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:
www.tomsleigh.com