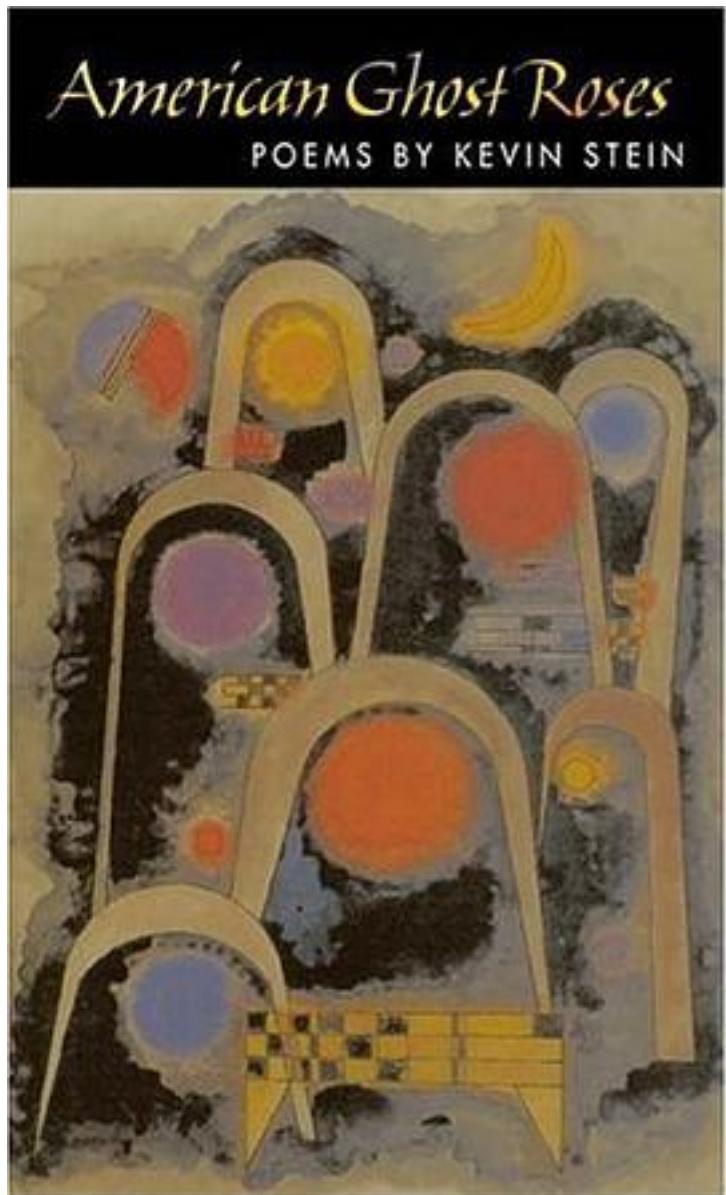


# American Ghost Roses



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In his first book as the poet laureate of Illinois, Kevin Stein shoulders an array of poetic forms, blending pathos, humor, and social commentary. These poems - ranging from meditative narratives to improvisational lyrics - explore art's capacity to embody as well as express contemporary culture. Stein embraces subjects as various as his father's death, magazine sex surveys, Kandinsky's theory of art, the dangling modifier, Jimi Hendrix's flaming guitar, racial bigotry, and a teacher's comments on a botched poem. Presiding over this miscellany are ghosts of a peculiarly American garden of dreamers and beloved misfits, those redeemed and those left fingering the locked gate. Kevin Stein is Poet Laureate of Illinois and the Caterpillar Professor of English at Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. He is the author of the poetry collections "A Circus of Want", "Bruised Paradise", and "Chance Ransom", as well as the critical studies "James Wright: The Poetry of a Grown Man", and "Private Poets", "Worldly Acts: Public and Private History in Contemporary American Poetry". A volume in the "Illinois Poetry Series", edited by Lawrence Lieberman.

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