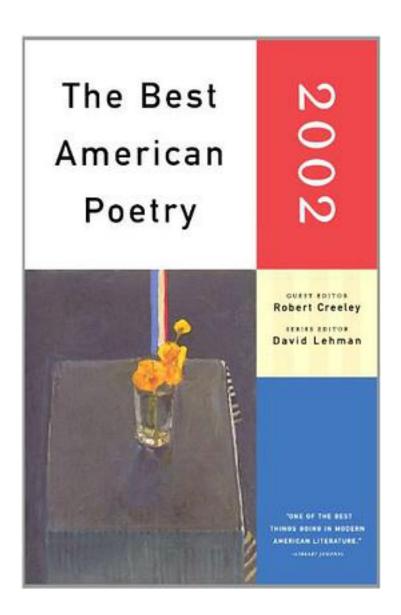
The Best American Poetry



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Heather McHugh loves words. A self-proclaimed ¿logophile, ¿ she capitalizes on puns and elevates wordplay to a species of metaphysical wit. ¿No word fun should be left undone, ¿ she says insouciantly. She is persuaded that in the language itself are hidden keys to unsuspected doors. She focuses on the ¿is¿ in ¿wish¿ or the ¿or¿ in ¿word¿ and goes to town with the associations and possibilities. By the logic of a pun or an anagram, she can pursue a line of thought to the pay-dirt of truth or pathos, hatching new metaphors at every turn. Unlike many ¿language poets,¿ McHugh is interested in the surface of a poem not to dramatize the limits of language but to make new meanings or explore old myths. Distrustful of a tone of deadly earnestness, McHugh is drawn to satire and sometimes uses humorous means to arrive at serious ends. Her poems link her most obviously to Emily Dickinson and, in their philosophical dimension, to Wallace Stevens, though she also freely acknowledges her debt to such little-known predecessors as the German satirical poet Christian Morgenstern. As an editor she casts a wide net. She greatly values intelligence, the full engagement of the intellect, and for all her play with language she is decidedly interested in ideas and stories, meanings and morals and manners. Among the poets who will most likely be included in Best American Poetry 2007 are: Ben Lerner, Matthea Harvey, Forrest Hamer, Linh Dinh, Misty Harper, Richard Kenney, Christian Bok, Dean Young, Gustaf Sobin, Olena Kalytiak Davis, Michael Palmer. Naturally, there will also be established masters such as Robert Pinsky, Louise Gluck, Charles Simic, Paul Muldoon, John Ashbery and the late Robert Creeley.

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