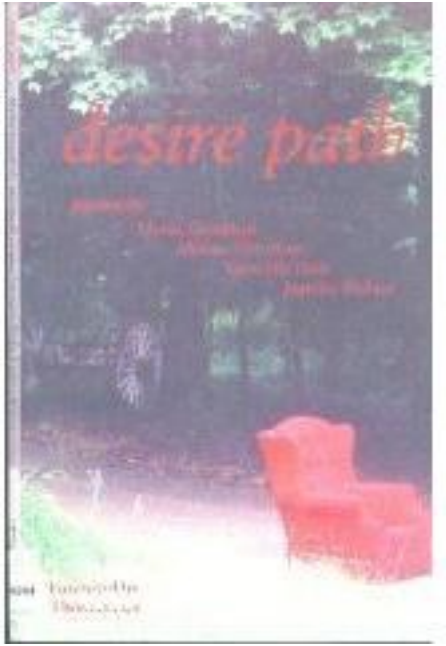


Desire Path



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FOREWORD
by Thomas Lux
What a good idea: gather chapbook-sized collections from four excellent poets and print them together as one book. Four books for the price of one! four different voices! each represented with a substantial number of poems! bound in one volume! Good idea! Since poems are made out of words (and the sounds of those words) and not ideas! as Paul Valéry said to the painter Edgar Degas! it is only a good idea if the poems are good and these are! remarkably so! and each poet's voice is distinct! utterly unique.
Myrna Goodman's poems are wry! irreverent towards things which deserve irreverence (sexism! say)! playful ("My Two Cents")! elegiac!
and always vivid. She can turn poetic convention on its head with lines like this from a poem called "Amelia": "But what matters

most/ about the sky is that Amelia Earhart got lost there.\" Blunt and beatiful and not what most people would think most important about the sky. Another poem \"Momenti\" captures precisely how memory works how one thing we see (or smell or hear etc.) makes us leap to another thing we remember. In this case watching men cut down a tree leads the speaker to a memory of her father s death: \"I recall how bending down to tie his bowling shoe my father lost his balance reaching for the meaning of his last mortal moment on earth.\" Goodman is not for the faint of heart -- a trait all good poets share. Maxine Silverman has a terrific ear for our language. Her mostly longish lines are lush and musical. Here are just two lines out of context in the first poem of hers called \"Trellis\": \"Fooled by rain cooling the day moonflowers bloom\" and \"The trellis each lime green leaf a lantern.\" One does not make that kind of music by accident. Even her syntax is musical (as it should be!) as in the opening of \"Cold Snap\": \"What the garden needs -- light to compose earth into nourishment/ we dream of through winter.\" There s a beautiful poem about mothers and daughters (\"Early Morning Mountain and Deer\") and a moving poem about the way the speaker s father eats an apple which reveals as much about a man and his character as a 500 page novel might. Read these poems reread them out loud!

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